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NARRATIVE

OF THE

CENTRAL DIVISION.

NARRATIVE

OF THE

CENTRAL DIVISION,

OR,

ARMY OF CHIHUAHUA,

COMMANDED BY

BRIGADIER GENERAL WOOL:

EMBRACING

ALL THE OCCURRENCES, INCIDENTS AND ANECDOTES, FROM THE TIME OF ITS RENDEZVOUS AT SAN ANTONIO DE BEXAR TILL ITS JUNCTURE WITH GEN'L TAYLOR, AND ITS FINAL DISBANDMENT AT CAMARGO—WITH AN ACCOUNT OF ITS SUFFERINGS WHILE PASSING THROUGH A BARREN AND HOSTILE COUNTRY—TOGETHER WITH A DESCRIPTION OF THE BATTLE OF BUENA VISTA, &C. AND AN INTERESTING APPENDIX.

BY JONATHAN W. BUHOUP,

LATE OF THE ARKANSAS CAVALRY.

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PREFACE.

It is with feelings of temerity, that we attempt to add one more to the already numerous, able, and judicious works which have been brought into existence, and are now before an enlightened public, on subjects connected with the present war with Mexico. The author of the following humble, unassuming pages, is aware, however, that among the number, none have as yet touched on that body of the army known as the Central Division, or Army of Chihuahua, excepting a small sketch written by a correspondent of the *New York Spirit of the Times*, which has since been copied and embraced in a publication entitled, "Taylor and his Generals."

The author has endeavored, in his narrative, to be as plain and concise as possible, confining himself strictly to occurrences in the Division and the army connected with it, from the time of its rendezvous at San Antonio de Bexar, until its final disbandment at Camargo. Having contemplated the publication of a work of this description, while connected with the army, he spared no endeavors to obtain all the adventures, incidents, anecdotes, *stampedes*, etc., which occurred during the campaign.

Being young in years, and not having had the advantages of a liberal education, he will have to trust this, his first attempt at authorship, to the mercy of a generous public. Should critics find employment in commenting on the labors of his pen, he begs of them to let the "darling attribute" predominate in this instance.

And he will ever remain,

The Public's most humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

Pittsburgh, Oct. 20, 1847.

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NARRATIVE

OF THE

CENTRAL DIVISION.

CHAPTER I.

Not only a War of Defence, but also one of Invasion, was judged advisable—Design of the Wise Heads—The Division to attack Chihuahua—Division ordered to rendezvous—March by land and voyage by water—Quarter Master's employment—Military Academy—Left, right—Strict Discipline very necessary, and orders issued—Mexican Fandango—The Countersign, "Rackensack or Sucker"—Orders Issued to March—Consternation about the "Haversack"—Crowds Collecting and some Deserting—The Tall Cherokee.

After the declaration of the war between Mexico and the United States, it was not only thought advisable to stand in defence of our frontiers, but to push the war into the enemy's country, and carry on a war of invasion, so as to bring the powers of Mexico to a just and honorable peace, and to punish them for the numerous insults heaped upon our nation for many years past, by outrages committed upon American citizens, &c.

To carry this into effect, it was designed by the wise heads at Washington to enter Mexico at three different points, and so conquer her at one blow. One detachment was to attack Monterey, a second Chihuahua, and the third Santa Fe.

The one which was to attack Chihuahua is that which we shall endeavor to confine ourselves to, namely, the Central Division. This division was ordered to rendezvous at San Antonio de Bexar, and Brigadier General Wool was selected to command. The different regular and volunteer corps that received orders to report there, were as follows: Company B, 4th artillery; one squadron 2d regiment United States dragoons; three companies of the 6th United States infantry; one regiment of mounted volunteers from Arkansas; also, one regiment from Kentucky and one from Tennessee. The two last named were subsequently ordered to join General Taylor, consequently they never arrived at San Antonio. Two infantry regiments from Illinois, one independent company from Kentucky, and one independent company from Texas, were also ordered there.

The dragoons, artillery, Arkansas regiment and the three companies of United States infantry, proceeded *en route* by land, while the two regiments from Illinois and the independent companies from Kentucky and Texas proceeded by water, via the Gulf of Mexico to Port Lavacca, and from thence one hundred and fifty miles by land to San Antonio de Bexar. It was the latter part of August, 1846, before the last of the troops arrived; as fast as they came they were ordered to the camp designated for them, Camp Crockett, about five miles north of San Antonio, on a stream of water called the Salough. The reason of its being termed Camp Crockett, is from the fact that the old veteran encamped there previous to his entering the Alamo in 1836.

During this time the Q. M. Department was employed in obtaining stores and wagons sufficient for such a march as the one about to be commenced. The different corps were daily employed in drilling—it had indeed the appearance of a Military Academy. It was an amusing sight to see the tall

athletic Arkansawian, who had been born on a bear skin, rocked in a hollow log, and had never attempted to march before, except marching through the cane-brake after game. He might be seen trying to keep step after the Captain's words, as follows: "Left, right! left, right! left!" The tall backwoodsman would keep very good time until his mind would wander back to his old haunts in Rackensack, as he called it—when he would start off at a pretty good long walk, much to the annoyance of his captain.

It was also necessary at this time to observe very strict discipline. Orders were accordingly issued to this effect, that no one should be absent from camp after sunset, and for this purpose the roll was called at six o'clock in the evening and nine o'clock at night. Consequently, any one found absent after this time would be punished, by being put on extra duty. But the volunteers were not to be thwarted in this manner: the Mexican Fandango had its attractions, and go to it they would. Immediately after roll call, at nine o'clock, they would steal past the guard, and walk five miles to San Antonio, and dance with the Senoritas until three o'clock in the morning, and then walk to camp to be ready for morning roll call. The strictest vigilance could not intercept them—they had their own countersign—in this way they could pass.

It was thus, when a soldier would come within hailing distance of the sentinel, and would hear the words: "*Who comes there?*" he would forthwith answer, "*Rackensack*," or "*Sucker*," as the case might be, when the sentinel would turn and walk off, and the soldier would continue to go on. Things went on at this rate until the 23d of September, when every man was speculating high on not going any further, and were laboring under the opinion that they would soon rejoin their friends, when, as if by magic, an order was

issued to hold themselves in readiness to march on the 26th of that month, with one day's rations cooked, in their haversacks.

Here indeed was a damper on their enjoyments, but they could not complain, for they were in for it. So they had to remain silent, until one fellow of the Arkansas regiment, who had the advantage of being a *leetle smarter* than the rest, cried out at the top of his voice, saying—"Feller Sogers: what in the h—ll is these things they call haversacks? I've a notion not to go, for old Wool says to put our grub in our haversacks, and I never saw such a thing—*a haversack!*"*

Crowds might now be seen collecting together and conversing about that indispensable article. Many declared they would not go, because old Wool was trying to pull wool over their eyes. Two of them were so much astounded at the word "haversack," that they deserted that same night.

A tall Cherokee belonging to the regiment, whom we shall have occasion to mention in the sequel, was heard to say that he did not intend to carry any grub, for he had killed many a deer and cooked a piece of it with old ribs.

* The Arkansas Regiment, not having received their uniform, of course had not received that article.

CHAPTER II.

Numerous Wagon Train—Bustle in breaking up the Camp and setting out—Detailment of Army, and number of Officers and Men—March on the morning of the 26th of September—The next day orders issued—Beautiful Prairie, and Exploits of the Cherokee Indian—Rest on the river Leon, and arrival of General Wool.

Finally, the evening of the 25th arrived; a numerous wagon train had been collected, and the stores, both provisions and ammunition, had come to hand from Port Lavacca. Every thing was made ready for the march. Accordingly, the next morning at break of day we all set off upon our march for Chihuahua, as we then supposed, but in this we were destined to be disappointed, as will be seen in the sequel.

Our readers may imagine the bustle in breaking up a camp; one might be heard to exclaim, "What d—d rascal stole our camp kettle?" or, "Some one has been eating our sugar?" or, "Who in the h—ll has been hooking the stirrups off my saddle?" and many other exclamations too impious and obscene to mention. At length every thing being arranged, we set out as follows:

Colonel W. S. Harney, who previously had joined us with a squadron of the 2d dragoons, in command.

First Lieutenant, D. H. Rucker, 1st dragoons, Acting Assistant Adjutant General.

Captain O. Cross, Assistant Quarter Master.

Doctor J. Simpson, Assistant Surgeon, U. S. A.

Doctor W. Levly, Assistant Surgeon, U. S. A.

Captain R. E. Lee, United States corps of Engineers.

Captain W. D. Fraser, United States corps of Engineers.

Captain G. W. Hughes, United States corps of Topographical Engineers.

First Lieutenant, L. Sitgreaves, United States corps of Topographical Engineers.

Lieutenant, W. B. Franklin, United States corps of Topographical Engineers.

Company B. 4th artillery, commanded by Captain J. M. Washington.

Subordinates: First Lieutenant J. P. J. O'Brien; First Lieutenant T. L. Brent; Second Lieutenant H. M. Whiting.

The Orderly's book showed for duty and able to march, four Sergeants, four Corporals, and eighty-seven Privates; total, 95; aggregate 99.

One squadron of the 2d regiment of dragoons, the officers in command were, Brevet Major B. L. Beall; First Lieutenant, J. H. Hill; First Lieutenant, D. G. Rogers; Second Lieutenants, J. M. Hawes and J. Y. Bicknell.

The Orderly's book showed for duty, and able to march, 118; non-commissioned officers and privates, making an aggregate of 123.

Three companies of the 6th United States infantry, to which was attached the independent company of Kentucky foot volunteers. The officers of the above corps were as follows: Major, B. L. E. Bonneville, 6th infantry; Captain, A. Cady; Captain, W. Hoffman; Captain, J. Williams; First Lieutenant, E. H. Fitzgerald, A. C. S.; First Lieutenant, L. Wetmore, commanding company; Second Lieutenant, W. Read, of the 5th United States infantry; Second Lieutenant, E. Howe; Brevet Second Lieutenant, W. Rhea, and three subalterns of Captain Williams' company, whose names we have not procured. The number of men reported for duty were 253; aggregate 265.

Arkansas Cavalry.—The staff was composed as follows: Colonel, A. Yell; Lieutenant Colonel, J. S. Roane; Major, S. Borland; Doctor Peyton, acting Surgeon; First Lieutenant; G. Mears, Adjutant; Captain Porter, Captain A. Pike, Captain S. R. Inglish, Captain J. Preston, Captain C. C. Danley, Captain J. J. Dillord.

Four companies, commanded by Captains Patrick, Moffit, Hunter and W. G., Preston, were ordered to remain at San Antonio, under command of Major Borland.

Adjutant's book reported for duty, and able to march, 392 non-commissioned officers and privates; aggregate, 417.

Two companies of the 1st Illinois volunteers, commanded by Captains Morgan and Prentis, numbering 150 men; aggregate 156. Two companies of the 2d Illinois volunteers, commanded by Captain Webb, numbering for duty 135; aggregate, 142. One company for the pioneer service, commanded by Captain Lee, numbering 30 men. The following officers, non-commissioned officers and privates, composed what was termed the advance army of Chihuahua; 1171 non-commissioned officers and privates; 73 officers; making an aggregate of 1244.

With this number we marched on the 26th of September. An order had been previously issued that none, excepting those that belonged to the army, should accompany us. Our first day's march was twelve miles, when we found plenty of wood, water and grazing. During the evening, as you would pass through the camp, your ears would be saluted with the following exclamations: "Well, here we are, on our road to Chihuahua. What do you all think of traveling three days without water, and cooking your grub with Buffalo dung?" Another might be heard to say, "I'll bet one month's wages that we'll never go any further than the Rio Grande." At this rate things went on till the sound of

the drum and the blast of the bugle announced the tattoo, and we all went to our tents to sleep and dream of traveling sixty miles without water and fighting Mexicans.

On the following morning we set out at sunrise. An order was here issued forbidding the discharge of fire-arms within hearing of the camp or column—also, to prohibit any one from leaving the camp or column without permission of the commanding officer of the day.

We passed through a beautiful prairie, over which bounded hundreds of deer. The scene was delightful to behold—it was too much for our Indian friend—his eyes sparkled with fire when a drove of them darted across before the column. He could not endure it. Regardless of orders he left the ranks and fell behind. How he passed the rear guard, we do not know—but this we do know, that it would have been impossible for any other person to have passed or got behind it. In the evening we encamped at a small German village on the banks of a beautiful stream, the name of which we have forgotten—not having our note book handy, we neglected it. We scarcely had been encamped one hour when our Indian appeared with his horse loaded with venison. Being somewhat acquainted with him, we were favored with a slice, which made a very savory meal. In consequence of presenting a piece thereof to the Colonel, he had this his offence forgiven, promising at the same time not to be guilty of a similar one.

However, we will see subsequently with what accuracy he kept his promise. Things went on very well without any thing occurring worthy of note until the first of October, on which day we rested at the river Leon, for the purpose of grazing our horses. In the afternoon of the same day we were joined by Gen. Wool in person, accompanied by First Lieut. I. McDowell, 1st Artillery A. D. C.; Brevet Second

Lieut. F. T. Bryan; Capt. J. H. Prentis, 1st Artillery, Assistant Adjt. General; Capt. W. W. Chapman, Assistant Quarter Master; First Lieutenant M. R. Patrick, 2d Infantry; Doct. C. M. Hitchcock, Assistant Surgeon, U. S. A.; Major D. Hunter, Paymaster, U. S. A.; Second Lieut. C. P. Kingsbury, Ordnance Department; Capt. E. Steen, 1st Regt. U. S. Dragoons; Capt. W. Eustace; Second Lieutenants A. Buford and J. H. Whittlesey, and a squadron of the 1st Dragoons, numbering 131 men. The aggregate force which joined us here was 144. Our force was now increased to 1,388 men, with Brigadier General John E. Wool in command.

CHAPTER III.

Creek Almost Impassable—The Cherokee in Pursuit of Game—False Alarm and Confusion—Facing Enemy and Discovery of Mistake—Rested for the Wagon Train—Salt Licks—Strictest Vigilance and a Stronger Guard—Explanation of Grand Rounds—The General Visits the Grand Rounds—The Old General Thunderstruck—The German sentenced and the General's hearty laugh—Army marches for the Rio Grande—The arrival of the Alcalde of Presidio—The Indian scrutinizing his Honor's Blanket—The Indian's ideas of the Alcalde—Orders issued from Headquarters.

We marched on the following morning. Nothing of great moment transpired until the 3d, when, the Arkansas Regiment being in the rear and wagon guard, and Gen. Wool with the remainder formed the advance, on coming to a very deep creek, which was almost impassable for the wagons, considerable time was taken up in crossing, so much so, that Col. Yell deemed it necessary to camp for the night —Gen. Wool being about twelve miles in advance.

During the afternoon, our Indian friend, forgetting his promise, sallied forth in pursuit of game, but missing the Arkansas camp, came up within sight of Gen. Wool's camp before he discovered his mistake. He forthwith commenced to retrace his steps, but not without being discovered by one of those men with whom the central division was continually troubled, in causing unnecessary alarms. Well, it was by one of those fractious-minded men that our hero was discovered. He immediately sounded the alarm: "A Mexican spy." Soon every man was up in arms—not a few wills were made by men who imagined their time was come. An

express was started up for the Arkansas camp. The express arrived at the above camp about 12 o'clock the same night. Here indeed was a scene—some running one way and some the other. Others, again, who had been so unfortunate as to lose their horses, were crying out: "Where in h—ll is my horse—some fellow has cut my rope." Another might be heard to ask at the top of his voice, whether old Wool was cut off, or how many Mexicans were there—the unfortunate Indian among the rest. As soon as every thing was ready, and every man had received his quota of cartridges and caps, off they started, helter skelter, and such screams as were sent up, the surrounding chaparalls had heretofore been strangers to. Had a catamount been within hearing distance, he would necessarily have blushed. On they charged, headlong—eager for the fray—and every man looking out for the Mexican lines.

At length, a tall fellow, who had the advantage of looking over the rest, exclaimed, "Thar they are!" And sure enough, there they were; but who? Why no one else but our own troops, formed in a line of battle, waiting for the enemy. Having heard the noise of the Arkansas men coming up, they took them to be the Mexican charge. When the troops were all together once more, and no one hurt, they sent up three cheers. Thus ended the first *stampede** of the Central Division.

We then rested to wait for the wagon train to come up, which arrived about 10 o'clock. We then continued our march about five miles farther, and encamped for the night. It is needless to say the Indian remained in camp that evening. We were off the following morning at break of day, nothing transpiring worthy of notice, except that we passed some salt licks, where the ground for six hundred yards

* An alarm.

around was covered with a hard cake of salt. The cavalry here salted their horses. When we came within 25 miles of the Rio Grande, a report was circulated through camp that the Mexicans were fortified on the opposite bank of the river, and intended to oppose our crossing. An express was started for San Antonio, ordering up Col. Hardin, with eight companies of the 1st Illinois Volunteers. Piquets were now sent out in every direction, and the strictest vigilance observed. The next day we marched about 16 miles. This brought us within nine miles of the enemy's country. We were encamped on a beautiful eminence, where we had a commanding view of the surrounding country. Many looked with eager eyes, trying to point out the course of the river, the banks of which we could discern. The afternoon of this day was occupied in inspecting the troops and arms. Previous to our approaching the enemy's country, a stronger guard was placed, and spies sent out in all directions. During the night, Gen. Wool accompanied the grand rounds in person, to try the vigilance of the sentinels.

For fear some of our readers may not know the meaning of "grand rounds," we will state that it is the duty of the officers of the day to visit the guard, at least once during the night.

Well, it was in company with this officer that the General visited the different posts. It is the duty of the sentinel, when he sees any one approaching to hail, and the grand round, on being hailed with, "Who comes there," will answer, "Grand rounds." The sentinel will then say, "Stand, grand rounds; advance Sergeant, and give the countersign." After this ceremony, the officer will advance, and after questioning the man on post as to what he has seen, proceeds on to the next.

It happened that this night the Sergeant was somewhat

longer in relieving the guard. One fellow got considerably tired, and out of humor—consequently when Gen. Wool and the officer approached, he was under the impression that it was the relief. He immediately hailed, "Who comes there?" The Sergeant replied, "Grand rounds." "Grand rounds be d—d; I thought it was the relief." The old General was thunderstruck at such an answer. Had it been some other officer of the army, the inconsiderate soldier would have been placed in irons without ceremony: but not so with our gallant old General. After standing mute for some seconds, we have no doubt he reflected that he was a volunteer, and undisciplined, and used to every privilege which the laws of God and man allowed him. After reproving him for his conduct, he cautioned him not to do so in future, and passed to the next. On coming up to this man, he was seen to get up. After hailing as usual, he questioned him as to the reason of his lying down. He being a German, and had laid down, no doubt, to seize a few moment's repose, the following harangue forthwith commenced: "Vell, Sheneral, I vash just tinking dere vash something comin, so I just tot dat I would lay down till him cot up so close dat I get a shoot at him. Vel den, I look and see dat it vash you." Here the General thought proper to ask him how he knew him. "Vy you see I saw dat you come up on de wrong side, and dat it vash not the Mexicans, so I tot dat it vash you, and it vash, too." After the General had enjoyed a hearty laugh, and complimented our German friend for his vigilance, he proceeded on without any similar occurrence.

The next morning, after an advance, rear and flank guards had been detailed, and placed according to orders, viz: The advance about one mile ahead of the column, the rear about six hundred yards behind the train, and the flank about one fourth of a mile from the wagons and columns, on each side

of the road. In this manner we commenced our march for the Rio Grande del Norte, where we arrived about 2 o'clock, P. M., on the 8th of October, and encamped in order of battle. The river banks were crowded with men endeavoring to catch a glimpse of a Mexican on the opposite side.

About 4 o'clock, P. M., the same day, his Honor the Alcalde of Presidio and his cabinet arrived on the opposite bank, with a white flag, and desired to have an interview with Gen. Wool, which was granted. Accordingly, he was beckoned across. He forthwith began fording it. On reaching the shore, he was conducted to Gen. Wool's tent, not only by a selected escort for that purpose, but by the whole army—all anxious to obtain a glimpse of this functionary. Our Cherokee was observed to scrutinize him very closely, more particularly his *blanket*, which was of a very fine quality. The Alcalde's business with Gen. Wool was to surrender the town of Presidio, on condition that private property should be respected, which, of course, the General assented to, and his Honor was permitted to depart without further parley. This he did by fording the river—being requested by the boys to keep his lower limbs out of the water, for fear he might catch cold.

He had hardly gone ten minutes, when we were accosted by our son of the forest, whose eyes sparkled as he approached us. Having a pretty good opinion of us, he confided to us the following: "What do you think of that there humbug?" "What humbug?" said we. "Why that there copper colored Alcalde, that was up to see the General. What did you think of that blanket of his? Was n't it mighty fine?" We nodded assent. "Well, do you think it would be any harm to sort of *skeer* him out of it, provided you could do so without knocking the old chap over?—for you see that would be wasting ammunition." We endeav-

ored to dissuade him from it, but it was all in vain. He said he did not think there was any harm in it. So he started off, and the last we heard him say was, that anything was fair in war.

The next morning the fatigue party were employed on both sides of the river, preparing the banks, so as to make them passable for the wagons, and in the evening an order was issued, which read as follows :

HEADQUARTERS, CAMP ON THE RIO GRANDE,
near Presidio, 9th October, 1846.

[ORDERS No. 89.]

Soldiers!—After a long and tedious march, you have arrived on the bank of the Rio Grande. In the performance of this service, the commanding general has witnessed with the greatest pleasure your patience, good order, and perseverance, under many deprivations and hardships. All have done their duty, and in a manner that reflects the highest credit on both officers and men. From this remark he would not except his staff, who have actively and zealously devoted themselves to the service; whilst Captain Cross has been eminently successful in forwarding his long train of supplies, without delay or serious accident.

To-morrow you will cross the Rio Grande, and occupy the territory of our enemies. We have not come to make war upon the people or peasantry of the country, but to compel the government of Mexico to render justice to the United States. The people, therefore, who do not take up arms against the United States, and remain quiet and peaceful at their homes, will not be molested or interfered with, either as regards their persons or property; and all those who furnish supplies will be treated kindly, and whatever is received from them will be liberally paid for.

It is expected of the troops that they will observe the most

rigid discipline and subordination. All depredations on the persons or property of the people of the country are strictly forbidden ; and any soldier or follower of the camp who may so far forget his duty as to violate this injunction, will be severely punished.

By command of General Wool.

(Signed.) James H. Prentiss, *Ass't Adj. Gen.*

CHAPTER IV.

Preparations to cross the River—Enter Presidio—Description of it—Encampment — Pelonsellas and Backwoods Dance — Return to Tents—Senoritas and Fandango—Explanation of Fandango—Guard at the Ford—News of the Battle of Monterey—Arrival of Colonel Hardin and his Regiment—Second Stampede—Cause of it—Major Beal's Adventure with a Sentinel—Orders not to Cock Guns, &c.—Drill—Orders to March—March and Encampment at a Hacienda—Arrival at San Fernando, and the Exploits of Captain Pike—Encamp and Experience a Cold Night—Soldier's Rations—Encamp in a Swampy Place—Water Bad—Express from General Taylor—Dry Grass on Fire—Uncomfortable Travelling—The Indian's Plan and Success in getting the Alcalde's Blanket.

On the morning of the 10th we prepared to cross the river. Two boats had been constructed at San Antonio, for the purpose of using here, but they were only used for conveying the infantry across. The cavalry, artillery and train forded it, the cannon being raised about two feet above the carriage, in which way they passed over without injury. The infantry crossed over first, the dragoons next, then the wagon train—the artillery remaining behind, for the purpose of covering the passage, should any attempt be made to oppose us. The dragoons and Arkansas Regiment having crossed, started in advance for the purpose of taking Presidio in true military style—every man having on the best clothes his scanty wardrobe would afford. Thus we proceeded to take the first Mexican town that was taken by the Central Division. It is situated on a piece of rising ground, about

eight miles from the river. Just before entering the town, we passed by an old church, which had more the appearance of a fortification or prison than a house of worship.

On our entrance, the citizens appeared to be enjoying it as a festival. Men, women and children were in the street, and saluted our ears with "*Buenos dies—mutcha bueno!*" The houses were similar to those occupied by the Spaniards at San Antonio de Bexar—built chiefly of mud, and a pretty good crop of grass and prickly pears growing on top of them.

We encamped about one fourth of a mile from town, on the road leading to Monclova. We had scarcely got into camp before it was crowded with Mexicans of all classes—some as spectators, others with small articles for sale, such as cakes and *pelonsellas*, which latter article is a small loaf of sugar, similar to our brown sugar, only of an inferior quality. After passing into the Arkansas camp, we discovered a crowd collected together. On approaching it, we saw two Mexicans, one playing on a clarionet, the other on a violin, while the Rackensacks were enjoying a good old backwoods dance, or as a volunteer would term it, a "stag break down." Did this look like two hostile parties meeting? Our readers will say "No, it did not." It looked more like the return of long absent friends, or a pic-nic party, than the camp of an invading army.

Things went on in this way until night, when some returned to their tents, to sleep for the first time in an enemy's country, or out of the United States. Others performed the well-known feat of stealing past the guard, and spending the night in adoring and dancing with the dark-eyed *senoritas* of Mexico, at a *fandango*.

For the information of our readers, we will remark that a *fandango* is somewhat similar to the celebrated dance houses of the Southern cities. The *fandango* is generally

given by some one of the citizens of the place, for no other purpose than to obtain from our soldiers their hard earned money. It is customary, when you dance with one of the ladies, to treat her to some refreshments, kept for that purpose—so that every dance will cost you, at the least, twenty-five cents, almost as much as a soldier's pay for one day. After treating her to cakes, nuts, &c., (as for drinks, none are kept public,) you will observe that she does not eat them; but, by watching her closely, you will see that she takes them back—consequently, you buy the same articles two or three times. Hence, our readers may form an idea of the stratagems made use of to play upon our unsuspecting volunteers.

The next day one infantry company was placed to guard the ford, but the main body moved their camp about four miles further on the road leading to Monclova—this place having tolerable grazing, but very bad water.

The following day, October 12, we heard of the battle of Monterey, and the armistice. The prospects for peace appeared fair, and joy beamed on every face. But, alas! in this they were doomed to be disappointed. Few formed an idea of the many hardships they had to undergo. Many of those poor fellows, who then expressed a hope of soon treading their native soil, where they could dwell in peace and safety, were destined to find their graves beneath the chaparals of the arid plains of Mexico.

On this day we were joined by Col. John J. Hardin's 1st Regiment of Illinois Volunteers. His field and staff were composed of the following officers:

Lieutenant Colonel Weatherford.

Major Warren.

Captain R. H. Chilton, A. Q. M., U. S. A.

Dr. Herrick, Assistant Surgeon.

Dr. Zabriskie, Acting Assistant Surgeon.

First Lieutenant W. H. Wallace, Adjutant.

Captains: Moore, Fry, Zabriskie, Richardson, Landon, Montgonery, Crow and Wyatt.

The total of Colonel Hardin's command, which joined us, was 538 non-commissioned officers and privates, and 36 commissioned officers. Aggregate, 574.

The next morning, October 13, we experienced our second *stampede*, as the soldiers called it. It was about eight o'clock, A. M., that platoons were heard firing in the direction of the river. At first, every one stood as still as if spell-bound, but at length a second firing was heard. All was bustle and confusion. The long roll was beaten. The bugles sounded to horse! The whole division was immediately under arms. The gallant Colonel Harney and his dragoons were in the saddle in a moment, and off. Next came the Rackensacks. A battle now seemed inevitable. Had Gen. Wool not come up at the moment he did, the citizens of Presidio would have witnessed a charge unparalleled in the annals of Mexican history. But the General met Colonel Yell, at the head of his mounted devils, (to use Colonel Harney's phrase,) and ordered him to wait until news came from Colonel Harney. Accordingly the troops were formed in line of battle, to await the consequences. Presently a dragoon was seen coming with all speed, and riding up to the General. About this time, a smart picking of flints might have been heard—every man being anxious to distinguish himself. The General was seen to give orders to his aid-de-camp, who forthwith galloped towards the lines. Now every man was looking, with eyes, ears and mouth open—the infantry with the left foot ready to step off at the word—the cavalry with their bridle reins tight, and their spurs in a position that threatened a severe attack upon the

flanks of their prancing steeds. The aid-de-camp was seen delivering orders to the Colonels and commanders of the different corps, who commenced relating to their commands the cause of the alarm. It was occasioned by the burial of a child belonging to the wife of one of the soldiers stationed at the ford of the river, who was attached to the company as a laundress. The soldiers, in honor to the afflicted parents, concluded to bury the young soldier with the honors of war, not apprehending the consequences.

After hearing this news, the infantry came to that position known in military tactics as a "rest"—the cavalry dropped their bridle reins, and brought their spurs to a position more comfortable to their horses. The commanders marched their corps back to the different encampments. Very little was said, except by a few who were more daring than the rest, who threatened that if they had the *daddy* of the young soldier, they would make him treat all hands. So we all returned to our tents, to converse on the topics of the day, and the second *stampede*.

Nothing more happened that day worth noticing, except that which gave Major Beal a great aversion to going the grand rounds. Happening to be officer of the day, and going his customary rounds, at 12 o'clock at night, he came upon one of the sentinels who had sat down for the purpose of resting. The sentinel jumped up all at once, exclaiming: "Who comes there? Stop! for by G—d she 's cocked!" The alarm which this occasioned, was indeed amusing. The Sergeant who accompanied him, left for the guard house—the Major retreated about ten paces, saying: "Don't shoot! it's me." The sentinel began walking his post as if nothing had happened, while the terrified officer of the day retraced his steps without visiting any more of the posts that night. The next day an order was accordingly issued forbidding

the cocking of fire arms previous to hailing three times.

The 14th was employed in drilling. In the evening Capt. Pike's squadron of the Arkansas Regiment was ordered to draw six days' rations, and hold themselves in readiness to march the following morning, the 15th, which they accordingly did, under the command of Lieut. Colonel Roane, for the purpose of forming an advance and for procuring forage.

Nothing special transpired until the following evening, when the were ordered to be ready to take up the line of march the next morning. The sick who were not able to march fifteen miles per day, were to remain at the Rio Grande, and those whose maladies were of a very serious character, were sent back to San Antonio with an empty train, under the command of Lieut. Calvert, of the Arkansas Cavalry.

We took up the line of march according to orders on the 16th of October. Our march, this day, was through an open space of country, interspersed here and there with a cluster of chaparal bushes. We camped this night at a small *hacienda*,* nothing occurring of note except that some of the volunteers got hold of some *aguadiente*.† This soon brought them into a state which would have caused them some difficulty in gaining admittance into a society known as the Sons of Temperance.

We set out the following morning by the break of day, and arrived in due time at a village by the name of San Fernando. The Mexicans here had been apprised of our approximation by Capt. Pike's squadron, hence our arrival caused but little excitement. It was related to us by one of the members of this squadron, that on entering this place, Capt. Pike ordered sabres to be drawn. In this manner they galloped into the Plaza,‡ alarming men, women, chil-

* A small village. † Whiskey. ‡ Market place, or square.

dren and dogs, and every thing alive within sight *vamosed.* After reaching the Plaza, he commanded, "Front into line—march!" In this manner they remained some time without seeing any thing in the shape of human. At last a door was seen opening and an old woman observed coming out—however, not with a flag of truce, but with a basket of pelonsellas. She approached the grave looking Captain, and, after a courtsey that would have done honor to our own city belles, commenced to address him in Spanish: "*Buenos dias quere comprar pelonsellas, mucho buena.*" After hearing this speech he gave the following orders: "By fours, forward, march," and so left the old lady standing, without even giving her a civil answer. Thus ended the capture of San Antonio by Capt. Pike's squadron, under the command of Lieut. Colonel Roane, of the Arkansas Cavalry.

We encamped within about one mile of the town, where there was plenty of forage and wood. This last article was somewhat in demand, for it was one of the coldest nights we ever experienced. Any man who has been to Mexico and felt the severity of what is termed a "Norther," can form some idea of such a night as that was. But, to use the soldiers' language, by bunking together, we were able to get a pretty comfortable night's sleep. In the morning, after despatching a soldier's breakfast, we were off.

For the benefit of those who know not what a soldier's rations consist of, we will state that we here received three quarters of a pound of pork, bacon or beef per day. Generally, about the same time, we got one pound of beef per day for four days, and three fourths of a pound of pork or bacon the fifth day, and one pound of hard bread or flour, and coffee, salt and soap accordingly. But the beef we here received was very bad—so poor, as the soldiers say, that to throw it against a smooth plank it would stick.

But this was only commencing the campaign, and no one formed an idea as to what had yet to be undergone. We arrived at the place designated for our camp pretty early in the day, which was a very bad place, the ground being very low and swampy, and the water almost undrinkable.

An express reached us here, Oct. 18th, from Gen. Taylor, giving an official account of the battle and capitulation of Monterey. However, it was not made public that night; hence, there was considerable uneasiness manifested—every man anxious to learn the particulars; but they were held in suspense until the next evening, when we encamped by the side of a large pond—wood being extraordinarily scarce. We had here a detailed account given of Gen. Taylor's operations, giving an account of the number of killed and wounded on both sides; likewise the terms the enemy capitulated on. After hearing this, the boys, judging that the prospects for peace were very flattering, sent up three cheers for old Zack and his men.

Scarcely had the above been read to the different corps, than suddenly the long roll was beaten and every man was to arms in a minute. No doubt many thought they were to have a chance to show their grit as well as the heroes of Monterey. But the alarm was occasioned by some dry grass taking fire in the vicinity of the Illinois camp, which threatened to make charge on their tents and other camp equipage. The men were immediately formed, not in a hollow square, as they would form to repel a charge from the Mexican lancers, but in a position more favorable to prevent the approach of the threatening element, namely, every one for himself or his own quarters.

The next morning it commenced a drizzling rain, which made it rather uncomfortable traveling. As we were passing along through the camp, viewing the different corps as they

marched out to take their places in the columns, what was our surprise to see our Indian friend snugly rolled up in the identical blanket which was worn by the Alcalde of Presidio, at the time of his interview with Gen. Wool.

Our curiosity led us to ride in company with the Indian for some time, for the purpose of learning from him the manner in which he had obtained it. After extorting from us a promise to keep it a secret, he related to us the following: "You see I was mightily taken up with that there blanket; but how to get it I knew not, hence, I had almost given up trying, when a thought popped into my mind that I would let on to be a deserter and get the Alcalde to hide me. So, the night before we left Presidio, I went to a fandango; there I found a negro who resided there. I went to him and asked him whether I could speak to him alone. At first he appeared to be afraid, but when I told him that I would not hurt him, he consented. I took him out of doors and said that I wished to desert them d—d Americans. When he heard this, he seemed delighted beyond all measure, and I asked him how or where I might conceal myself. He then began: 'Why, you see, sar, dar's dat ole boss of ours—he am de greatest feller to hide folks you ever seed—you see, when I run away from ole massa in Texas, I come here, and one day, hearin' dat de ole massa was after me, I went to dis same ole feller, and if he didn't hide me in one of de darkest places—why, it was blacker dan I am myself—if ole massa had a come dar, he couldn't a found me 'cept by de shinin ob my eyes.'

"After I heard this, I asked him to take me to the house of the Alcalde, which he immediately did. On entering the house the negro commenced talking Spanish and the old fellow began to bustle around mightily; he took me into a back room, shut the door, put on his blanket—but not this one

(alluding to the one he had on,)—this must have been a sort of a Sunday blanket. However, the old fellow went out, leaving me alone in the back room, and the negro in the front room. The negro had told me before that he was going to hunt a place to hide me. I now began to think that I had got into a mighty bad scrape; but I had no time to lose, so I began to look around. In one corner of the room I saw a sort of chest; I opened it and looked in, but could see nothing of the blanket. However, I lifted up some old things that were on the top, and sure enough there it was, folded up nice for the next Sunday. I took it out, but how was I to get away? The back door was fastened—the negro was in the front room, and what to do I knew not. But on going to the back door, I found it fastened on the inside with a bar. I took it out, and as easily as possible opened the door and climbed over a prickly-pear fence. If I didn't break for camp faster than a quarter horse, then I am no Ingin.

"However, when I reached the camp, I could not get past the guard all I could do. I tried the old countersign—I hallooed "Rackensack" and "Sucker," but it was no go. It must have been one of them 'tarnal regulars. Here, then, I was bound to stay out all night, and if ever you saw an Ingin skeered, it was I. The 'tarnal wolves seemed to be fighting for the rights of their country and the old Alcalde's blanket; so I had to form one of them squares like the infantry does, to keep them from charging on me. Finally, daylight came, the wolves retreated and I went to camp, got my horse and left for fear that the old fellow might take a sort of hankering after his blanket and come for it. But he did not catch me, and so I have the blanket, and don't you think it's very comfortable such a morning as this?"

Of course we had to agree with him as regarded comforta-

bleness; but as to the manner in which he obtained it, we endeavored to point out to him the evil that would grow out of such conduct, and that he was running a great risk of his life in tampering with the Mexicans at this rate. It was no use, however; his only reply and motto was: "Anything is fair in war," and, "catch an Indian asleep, will you?" At the conclusion of this last speech we left him, and, as we had given a promise to remain silent on the matter, of course we had to comply with it.

CHAPTER V.

Encamp on the River Sabinass—A Mean Transaction—Move, and Come to a Swift Stream—Another Stream, called Alamo—View of Mountains—A Day of Rest—The Days of the Month not forgotten—Colonel Roane waiting for them—Alcalde and bare-legged Mexicans—His Honor desires Peace—Private Property Respected—His Departure—The Boys Charge the Sugar Cane—Silver Mines of Dr. Long—Mexican Taste—The Lasso—Its Formidableness.

This evening, October 21st, we encamped on a stream by the name of Sabinass, which is noted for its swift current. Here we found wood plenty, and at the same time saw some Mexicans, being the first we had met since we left San Fernando. They were selling *pelonsellas* and sweet potatoes. The latter article met a good sale, it being a sort of rarity.

We shall here notice an action committed by some person or persons, the perpetrators of which, if we had their names, we would not scruple to publish. However, we are pretty confident that it was none of the volunteers, because we think that at this time they had not forgotten the injunction placed on them by General Wool, at the Rio Grande, not to molest the persons or property of peaceably disposed citizens; nor do we think that our Indian, although the inveterate enemy of the Mexicans, would so far forget his duty as to be guilty of such a cowardly and dastardly act. About dark we found that four Mexicans had retired to the bank of the river, for the purpose of encamping for the night. They

had scarcely struck their camp fires, when some Americans (if such they could be called,) approached their camp, and requested to see some *pelonsellas*, which the Mexicans proceeded to show. When they had opened them, they were seized by some of the party, who began to carry them off. The Mexicans endeavored to secure their property, but they were inhumanly beaten, their *pelonsellas* and money taken, and themselves unceremoniously put into the river. We do not attempt to take the part of the Mexicans, for some of our readers may say that they would use us as bad, had they us in their power. This we admit; but the American people make more pretensions to civilization. Had the Mexicans given any just cause or provocation for such proceedings, we would agree, as far as the flogging is concerned, but to half murder them, for the paltry sum of a few dollars, was brutal. We stamp it with the most unqualified disapprobation. Neither did our good General approve of it. Could he have ferreted out the perpetrators of such a high-handed outrage, wo would have betided them.

The next morning we did not start as early as usual. Preparations were being made to cross the river, which we found would be very difficult. The foot men moved off about eight o'clock, having to wade the stream, which was extremely difficult, from the reason of its being so swift and deep. It was likewise found that the mules were unable to stand against the current; consequently they had to work the wagons across by means of a long rope, which was fastened to the wagons on one side, and drawn over in this manner by men stationed on the other. Thus, when one wagon had crossed in this manner, three or four of the cavalry would take it back. In this manner we worked until almost night.

After this the infantry and dragoons marched about five

miles, to another stream, similar in rapidity to the other, called the Alamo. For the purpose of facilitating the passage of the wagons, as fast as they arrived, the Arkansas Cavalry crossed over and encamped on the opposite side, and then assisted the remainder to get across.

The following morning we had the first view of mountains. As they arose in majesty and grandeur in the horizon, they had the appearance of opaque clouds, and many bets were made on their being such.

Next morning, the wagons being all over, the Arkansas Regiment came up with the main body of the army, which was encamped on a strip of rising ground, about six hundred yards from the river, the train and troops having forded two of the swiftest streams in Mexico. We were, upon this hazardous enterprise, permitted a day of recreation and rest, for the purpose of cleaning up and washing.

For fear some of our readers may suspect we had forgotten the days of the month, we will state that the advance arrived on the right bank of the river Alamo on the 22d day of October, 1846, the remainder on the 23d, and we rested on the 24th. We took up our line of march again on the 25th, being only about 12 miles from a town called San Rosallia.

We reached the camp about noon, where we found Col. Roane's command waiting for us, and to one of them we are indebted for the particulars of the capture of the place.

On approaching the town, they were met by the Alcalde, accompanied by about twenty bare-legged Mexicans, with a negro for interpreter, whom one of our men immediately recognized as once belonging to a gentleman in the State of Tennessee, and who had absconded from his master about ten years since.

After the usual salutations, the Alcalde commenced by

saying: "Our desire is for peace, and we are willing to surrender the town and public property"—(it is needless to say there was very little of that found,)—"provided, the private property is respected."

A man in the ranks said, "You have to give it up without any proviso!"

The Alcalde answered, "*No untende!*"

The Captain had to interfere, and the Colonel assured his Honor that private property would be respected, who, after bowing about a dozen times, departed.

Now, the boys, not thinking or not remembering the treaty, and not having the fear of Gen. Wool before their eyes, forthwith charged on a field of sugar cane and made an unprecedented havoc among the lucious vegetable. No set of Erzgebirgen of Bohemia, could have fallen upon that field with an equally devouring appetite.

Here we visited a silver mine owned by a Dr. Long, formerly of Pennsylvania. From appearances we opine that he was not doing a flourishing business, for, to use the phraseology of a certain Major, "he looked no better than his operatives." He exhibited to us quite a variety of specimens of ore in its natural state, and also after it had been smelted. The silver produced here is principally used for plating saddles and ornamenting bridles, for which the Mexicans display an extraordinary taste—in fact they are similar to the Indians in this respect. Give a Mexican his pony, ornamented bridle, plated saddle, and *lasso*, and he is then at the highest point of ambition.

The *lasso* is the most formidable weapon the Mexican possesses—at least he uses it with more expertness and dexterity than any other. As Mr. Gregg says, in his "*Commerce of the Prairies*," it forms part of the sports of their childhood. This we had an opportunity of noticing, for we have

seen a child scarcely able to walk alone, attempting to throw its *lasso* over the heads of dogs, chickens, &c., &c. We have been informed that it is a trifle for an expert ranchero to chase a bear, capture it with his *lasso*, and drag it to death. We will have an opportunity of informing our readers, before we come to the "*finis*," of the manner in which they use it as a deadly weapon against the invaders of their country—but we have said enough to let them know what a *lasso* is.

CHAPTER VI.

A Place of Chaparals and Prickly Pears—Dilemma of a Colonel—Ready to March—Pass through a Miry Place—Several Ranchos—An Officer Commits a Mean Action—Arrived in Camp in Good Time—Evidently among the Mountains—Travels of a Gentleman—Journey through Sandy Plains—Unfeelingness of some of the Wagoners—Cold Consolation for Poor Footmen—Wagon Masters—Their Authority—Offset to the Above—Hospital Wagons—Encamp—Good Water, but no Wood—The General receives Information of a Fortification—March—All Ready for a Brush—No Mexican Soldiers, but a Dozen of Apple Carts—The Boys Charge on the Apples—The Indian again Busy—The "Sucker's" Misfortune—Encampment, and Visit to the Rancho—Witness a Specimen of Mexican Slavery—Hot Spring—Cross several Streams—A Dragoon almost Drowned—The Indian and the Kid—Monclova—Its Surrender by the Alcalde thereof—Encamp within three miles of Monclova—Orders given to Clean, Shave and Cut Hair.

THE place where we were encamped was covered with a very thick chaparal, and any quantity of prickly pears. If we may be allowed to quote scripture, and these are the pricks referred to in the good book, it would indeed be hard to kick against them. But to our narrative.

A certain Colonel, not any too strenuous in his morals, happened to be officer of the day. In going his usual rounds, he happened to get entangled in a dense cluster of prickly pears. Just at this critical juncture, the sentinel hailed him, when the following dialogue occurred. Its repetition will no doubt be diverting to the majority of volunteers, but for the refined ear, it is rather blasphemous. We give it, how-

ever, *verbatim*, merely to show what sort of an animal a Rackensacker is :

Sentinel.—" Who comes there ?"

Just at this moment the refined Colonel struck his knee against one of the goading articles, while the sentinel was concluding the last word. The Colonel was stung so vividly that, in the pain, he cried out—

" J—s C—t !"

Sentinel.—" Halt! J—s C—t ! and send the twelve Apostles with the countersign."

The Colonel after this merely remarked, " A pretty dark night, friend," and passed on without any further interrogatories.

The following morning found us ready for the march, but we were somewhat detained, in consequence of having to pass a miry piece of ground on our road. In a very short time it was rendered passable for the train. As we marched on we passed several ranchos, where, from appearances, they were in the custom of raising an immense quantity of sugar cane.

During this day we saw a very mean act committed by an officer, who should have shown a better example to his men. Coming to a place where there were some neatly finished gourds hanging out, doubtless for sale, the officer rode up, took one of the finest of them, and handed the old lady (apparently the owner of them) a five dollar gold piece. No doubt the woman never had, in all her life, a sum of money like this. She immediately began to make signs with her hands, in order to let him know that she could not change it, which the gentleman understood to mean that she was presenting it to him, or at all events a spectator might have judged so, for he wheeled his horse about, saying : "*Muches grasious*," and galloped off, leaving the old lady *minus* her

beautiful gourd. We subsequently heard him relate how he came by it, and the trick he had played on the old lady to obtain it for nothing. Had we not heard him boast of the act, we would not have noticed it; but our intention is to give every occurrence where injustice was done. The officer shall suffer alike with the private. We shall defer giving the officer's name, but if ever these lines should meet his eyes, he will remember it.

We arrived in camp in good time. We were encamped on what once had been a stream of water, but which was now reduced to a few stagnant pools. We would ask our readers, or at least that portion of them who have never undertook such a campaign, how they would relish clearing a greasy scum off the stagnant water, and quenching their thirst with such a beverage. But after marching 15 or 20 miles, under a sun almost hot enough to set fire to the dry twigs, we were glad to find water as good as this.

We were now evidently among the mountains. As they arose towering above our heads, without a green thing visible, they presented a very romantic aspect; the distance you seem to be from them is also very deceptive. We heard a gentleman say that when he came to camp he intended to take a walk to the mountains, from which he could take a view of the surrounding country. He started and walked on, incautious of the distance he had went, when upon looking up, he discovered that the mountains appeared to be as far off as when viewed from the camp. It is needless to say that he proceeded no farther, but returned to camp, which he reached some time after dark—some fears having been entertained for his safety. We afterwards learned that it was fully 20 miles to the base of the mountains.

The following day our journey was through one of those dry and sandy plains, known now to every man belonging to

the Central Division. The suffering for want of water in crossing these plains is beyond all conception of the mind. We cannot speak very favorably of some of the wagoners who belonged to the train, for they had the advantage of having a small cask attached to each wagon. However, we have no doubt that it was designed by the proper authorities for the troops to be supplied therefrom also—but the wagoners turned it into a speculation; consequently we have seen them exacting twelve-and-a-half cents for a single drink. As some of our soldiers were not very flush of money, they were compelled to suffer exceedingly, while the hard-hearted wagoner would haul it to the next camp, there throw it out, and fill the cask the next morning, in order to have fresh water for sale. We are certain that if the Quarter Master had known it, there would have been a stop put to such foul proceedings.

We have seen footmen who were so fatigued and exhausted that they could with difficulty get along. In this condition they would lay themselves down by the side of the road, and wait for the train. They not unfrequently received but a very poor consolation.

There were a sort of *things* called wagon-masters, clothed with about as much authority as a corporal of a company of soldiers. When circumstances similar to the above occurred, and the poor wayworn soldier would request permission to ride, these petty officers would exercise their authority by refusing them, with not a few curses. By this authoritative treatment, the exhausted pedestrian was compelled to fall behind, and perhaps not reach the camp till after nightfall, besides running a great risk of falling a victim to the *lariette* or *lasso* of some murderous ranchero.

As an offset to the above, we could make some few honorable exceptions, for we have known some who would assist

the helpless soldier, as far as they could. It is true there were regular hospital wagons for the sick, but these were mostly crowded with men who were very ill, or totally unable to move.

This evening we encamped on a small stream of tolerably good water, but we had no wood. The cooking done here was not very extensive.

About dark the General received information that the Mexicans were fortifying a pass about thirty miles in advance, for the purpose of opposing our progress. The cavalry and artillery had orders to be ready to march at 4 o'clock the next morning, in order to rout the Mexicans out, before they could get their ends accomplished.

According to orders, the cavalry and artillery set out, under command of Colonel Harney—and a more appropriate officer could not have been selected. When we had proceeded about 12 miles, we were met by some Mexicans, who confirmed the report. Here, also, General Wool and his escort joined the advance, for the old hero could not think of remaining behind, when there were prospects for a fight. We finally arrived in sight of the pass, but no Mexicans could be descried with the naked eye; consequently the column halted, and Mr. Gregg, author of "*Commerce of the Prairies*," being one of General Wool's aids, and interpreter, was sent to the summit of a hill close by, to reconnoitre the pass by the aid of a telescope. His report was, that he saw Mexicans and the semblance of a camp, but as to their employment, he was unable to make it out. Things now looked as if we were to have a fight for certain. Every man examined the priming of his gun, and all seemed willing to have a brush.

On coming within about a mile of the pass, we could see Mexicans very plainly to the left of it, and something that

resembled a stone wall, but we could see no cannon, or any other kind of arms. On coming up to the pass, no one appeared to oppose us, and we marched through without interruption. Having got through, and surveying the location around us, we indeed discovered a camp. It was not the camp of Mexican soldiers, however, but about a dozen of carts, laden with apples on their way to San Rosallia. This indeed was a rarity. The troops were halted, and presently a well dressed Mexican appeared, and very politely invited General Wool and his staff to his house, which was within the stone wall we had seen—his rancho being walled in, as security against the depredations of the Camanche Indians.

The boys, as soon as the General was out of sight, concluding that they had been fooled once more, and that they ought to have some recompense, unceremoniously charged the apple carts. Those who had money paid for their apples, but those who had not that indispensable medium of trade, did not just exactly steal them, but as the volunteers say, they mustered them into service.

We saw our Native American friend among the rest, supplying not only himself, but many others, whose moral honesty would not permit them to partake of the sport, but who imagined that it was no sin to eat them, after they had been taken in an illegal manner. The Mexicans could not stand this game. They had to fall back. However, we think they did not lose much; for those who did pay for their apples paid a pretty good price, viz: twelve-and-a-half cents for three. Thus our readers, we have no doubt, will think they were served right. The infantry and train did not arrive here until pretty late in the evening—so the "Suckers" had the misfortune to miss the grand charge made upon the apple carts by the "Rackensackers."

We encamped here the following day, for the purpose of

resting. As a matter of course, we had a chance of reconnoitreing the place. We paid a visit to the rancho. Here we had an opportunity of witnessing the horrors of Mexican slavery. We entered a large enclosure, where we beheld about one hundred small huts, and in these there were indeed objects of pity, living, or rather staying, in all the dirt and filth imaginable. It was a shocking sight indeed, and we do conjecture that if some of our anti-slavery lecturers had been there, they would have had a subject to expatiate on for at least one lunar year. A German blacksmith, who had been working there for about twenty-five years, informed us how these folks were reduced to, and held in slavery. It seems they are there for debt, having been involved to such an extent that it was impossible to extricate themselves; consequently, the owner of such a rancho paid their debts, while these unfortunate debtors were to work for him until the debt was paid. In this way they have been duped. The wages allowed them for their labor is from two to four dollars per month, and about one peck of corn per week. Such wages are of course inadequate to the support of themselves and families. In a very short space of time they get so involved to this gentleman of the rancho, that they never can emancipate themselves, and thus they remain in this kind of slavery all their lives.

Contiguous to this place is a remarkably hot spring, to which a considerable number of invalids resort—its medicinal properties being considered of the first order.

The following morning we proceeded on our march, crossing several small streams, at one of which a very serious accident (almost) occurred. The current was exceedingly rapid. One of the cavalry went down to the edge to water his horse, when the horse slipped off the bank, and fell in, over head and ears. It was with the greatest

difficulty that he was rescued. The horse floated down two hundred yards, and then reached the shore in safety.

Our march this day was only 12 miles, hence we encamped very early. We were now 18 miles from Monclova. Nothing special took place this evening, and in the morning we marched for that place. We did not observe anything worthy of notice, except while going ahead we saw our Indian friend carrying a kid behind his saddle. We enquired of him how he came in possession of it. "O," said he, "I had an old load in my gun, and I wanted to discharge it. I didn't want to waste the cartridge, so I tried my sight on this young goat. Won't you have a piece of it to-night?" We told him we had no objection.

Finally we got within three miles of Monclova, but at this distance it was not visible, being surrounded by hills. The column halted here, to wait for the Alcalde of the city to come out and surrender it. This dignitary did not make his appearance as soon as was expected. However, just as Captain Washington had suggested the propriety of advancing to the summit of one of the hills which overlook the city, and sending an iron messenger for him, he arrived with his long train of attendants. After the usual compliments, he commenced to parley, but General Wool had not come to parley. He politely requested him to deliver up the city, and the public property, and told him that he would be held responsible for the good behavior of the Mexicans. To these terms his Honor the Alcalde agreed, or rather had to agree.

General Wool did not deem it necessary to enter the city that evening; consequently we encamped within three miles of Monclova on the 31st of October, 1846. We had departed from San Antonio on the 26th of September, making thirty-six days from the time of taking up our line of march,

till we reached Monclova—travelling a distance of 417 miles.

On the ensuing day an order was read, informing us that Brigadier General Shields would have the immediate command of the troops, and also that that officer would review us the next day, for which purpose every man should be shaved, and have his hair cut, and clean himself up in the best manner possible.

CHAPTER VII.

The Boys think hard of the Order to Shave—Major Warren appointed Governor of Monclova—Mexican Market—The Indian again on the Carpet—Joined by a Squadron of Dragoons—Orders for a Great Military Parade — Enter Monclova — Description of it — Encamp about a mile from the City—Volunteers destroy the Cotton Trees—Orders on the 4th to march by the 8th—Hard Speeches—Sickness in the Camp—Poor Shelter and worse Nourishment—Junction of the Rear of the Central Division—Captain Hunter's Company—Reinforcement—A regular Encampment—The Provost Guard—Its use —The Indian again—The Morning of the 8th arrives—Orders to Scout, &c.—Mexican Flour—Its Inferiority—Soldiers Curse in consequence thereof—Gen. Wool not to Blame—In for it—Sickness Bad and Duty Irksome—Coffee Scarce—Hospital.

The orders we had received, so far as the cleaning and hair-cutting business was concerned, were cheerfully obeyed, without the least demur; but that clause which required every man to shave, was something of moment, because there were not a few beardless boys belonging to the Central Division, who otherwise stood in ranks with whiskered bipeds, and who, very naturally, and as a matter of course, thought themselves men too. It wounded their very sensitive feelings to think of doing that which they never did before. However, they postponed the matter until the next day, and some of the young "Suckers" were about sending a deputation to the General, to ask him to have the obnoxious part of that law repealed, viz: that "every *man* should be shaved," when the drums beat, and the bugle sounded.

announcing that the time had arrived for the review, and thus they had to abide the consequences of appearing without being shaved.

We were reviewed by General Shields—who, in compliment to him, is a noble looking and dignified personage—and as he said nothing to the young volunteers, about not being shaved, he of course became a favorite.

We had forgot to mention that prior to this General Wool had taken up his quarters in the city—likewise Colonel Harney. Major Warren was appointed Governor, and two companies of the 1st Illinois Volunteers, under Captains Morgan and Prentis, formed a police, to enforce orders.

Here we had a Mexican market, with all its delicacies, but they demanded such exorbitant prices for them, that some of the boys were compelled to adopt the old mode of mustering into service—at all events the Indian was seen to eat as many cakes and other good things as any one, although he was never seen to purchase anything. We asked him how he managed matters so adroitly as never to be discovered by the Mexicans? "O," said he, "that is a very easy matter. You see I wait until dark, when the Mexicans start for home. I then lie in the bushes until a man comes along. Then I run out with my gun, and *skeer* him so bad that he leaves his basket, and then I have nothing to do but help myself." Next day we asked him why he did not *skeer* the old women, saying that we thought they would be easier frightened than the men? He burst into a loud laugh, and said we were mistaken, that he had tried them, and found that they were braver than the men.

On the 3d of November, we were joined by a squadron of dragoons, and a part of Captain W. G. Preston's company of Arkansas Cavalry, under command of First Lieutenant

Tomlin, escorting some wagons loaded with money for the payment of the troops.

On the same day we received orders to be ready for a great military parade on the following day, for the purpose of celebrating the capture of Monclova, and also to move our camp within one mile of the city. Great indeed was the preparation for this splendid affair—not because it was new to the soldiers (for we think that by this time they were getting tired of parading), but for the purpose of seeing who would attract the attention of the *senoritas* most. Accordingly, next day, at 10 o'clock, the troops were formed in a line, and marched off for the city—the artillery in advance, the infantry in the centre, and the dragoons and cavalry bringing up the rear. In this manner we entered the city. As we entered we had to pass through a beautiful promenade, lined with large cotton-wood trees. On either side was a row of seats as white as alabaster, and at one end was a large monument, with some inscription on it, but not being very well versed in the Spanish language, we were under the necessity of remaining ignorant of its import. On arriving at the *plaza*, Major Bonneville's Battallion formed into line and saluted the troops as they passed, by a roll of the drum. The sound was very strange, the houses being so close that it appeared as if we were going through a vault. The *plaza* was crowded with Mexicans of all classes, from the aristocratic *caballero* down to the humble *pion*. The cathedral, which stands in the *plaza*, is beautiful indeed; a better piece of architecture we think we never saw. It is equal, if not superior, in magnificence and ornament, to the celebrated church at Saltillo, of which so much has been said by the correspondents of the newspaper press of the United States.

After parading through the principal streets of the city, we started for our new camp, which was about one mile dis-

tant, on the summit of a small eminence, with not a particle of wood visible, except some young cotton-wood and fig trees, which had been planted there.

On these the volunteers made a general rush, and soon demolished them, for which we subsequently were informed the General had to pay, or rather did pay, the sum of $400. Thus, from this time forth the troops had to buy the wood they used, from the Mexicans, who brought it about ten miles on donkeys, at the rate of twenty-five cents a load. The consequence was that not a few fights came off in the morning, because, as we have before said, money was somewhat scarce with some of the boys. They had, therefore, to come the Indian over the rest.

The next day, 4th of November, we received orders to hold ourselves in readiness to take up the line of march by the 8th—where to, we knew not. It was very afflictive for us to think of setting off so soon. All expected that we would remain here fifteen or twenty days, because by this time we were worn down, and very tired.

Hard speeches were by this time heard, respecting Gen. Wool and the late false alarms. Some went so far as to say that they suspected him to be a little frictious minded.

Sickness now began to make its way through the camp, and this caused numbers to be dissatisfied. It is truly discouraging to be ill in the army, for very few, whose disease reaches to an exacerbating degree, ever recover. Not having any shelter, except that which a tent affords, you have no barrier against the weather; nor have you anything to eat but salt pork or beef, of the poorest quality. This is exceedingly poor nourishment for the sick soldier.

The following day we were joined by the rear of the Central Division. The following is a list of the officers' names:

Colonel S. Churchill, Inspector General, U. S. A., commanding.

First Lieutenant J. H. Carlton, 1st Dragoons, Aid-de-camp.

Major C. Thomas, Quarter Master, U. S. A.

Captain Davis, Acting Assistant Quarter Master.

Captain Howard, A. C. S.

Doctor E. B. Price, Surgeon.

Doctor J. H. White, do.

Captain George H. Blake, 2d Dragoons, commanding detachment of Artillery Dragoons and Infantry.

Brevet Second Lieutenant J. Oaks, 2d Dragoons, on duty with Captain Blake.

Captain W. G. Preston, Arkansas Volunteers, with the remainder of his company.

Colonel W. H. Bissel, commanding 2d Illinois Volunteers.

Lieut. Colonel Morrison, 2d Illinois Volunteers.

Major Trail, do. do.

And seven companies of the 2d Illinois Volunteers, commanded by the following officers:

Captains Wheeler, Miller, Baker, Coffee, Lott, Armstrong, and Lemon.

Captain Charles A. Seefeld, commanding one company of Texas Volunteers.

Captain Hunter's company of Arkansas Volunteers came as far as the Rio Grande, but were then ordered to remain there, to assist Captain Moore, of the 1st Illinois Volunteers, in constructing a fortification to defend the ford.

The detachment that left San Antonio under Colonel Churchill, numbered, in the aggregate, 724; but in consequence of Captain Hunter's company remaining behind, only 660 joined us. With this reinforcement, we deemed ourselves ready and prepared for any emergency.

We had now gone into a regular encampment, and the

guards were as follows: One main guard, one provost guard, two flank guards, and one mounted piquet. There was also one patrol, for the purpose of patrolling the town.

The provost guard was the one to which prisoners were taken, that is, men who committed deeds in camp, such as refusing to do duty, &c., when detailed for that purpose, or leaving the camp without permission from the proper authorities—in fact for any petty offence. They were put to hard labor, until they were brought up for trial. Frequently after this they were subjected to hard labor for fifteen or twenty days more, and had five or ten dollars of their pay witheld. It was very unpalatable to the volunteers to undergo the above punishment for such a small offence as leaving camp without leave.

Thus our Indian became an almost constant victim—not for plundering the Mexicans, but for being absent at roll call. However, to use his own words, he went there for the improvement of his health—for, when there, he was generally very sick, or at least appeared so. The fact is, we never saw an individual who could feign sickness better than he. He was naturally of a dark cast, but on these occasions his phiz was extremely white, or rather pale, so that the provost marshal could not get much work out of him before his trial. Afterwards, he had always to be sent there, for work he would not for the Sergeant; hence, he was only sent there to serve out his time. He was sentenced to labor, but no labor would he perform. He said they might stop his pay, but he would make it up off the Mexicans. As for work, he said he would never do any, as long as he could fool them, which he generally contrived to do.

Finally the morning of the 8th arrived, but no preparations were being made for marching. For once we had received orders to march without getting things in order.

This day Captain Porter's company of Arkansas Volunteers received orders to draw four days' rations, and to be ready to proceed on a scout. They were also to reconnoitre and examine a pass on the road to Chihuahua, to ascertain if it was passable for wagons. Accordingly they set out on the following morning.

We now commenced to draw Mexican flour, instead of American—and such stuff! In the way of making bread, it reminded us of Dr. Franklin's celebrated saw dust pudding. Was not this food for soldiers? Such food is used in our country for feeding swine. And this stuff was made up into a sort of cake, for the sustenance of rational creatures—of men who had left all the delicacies which nature bestows on man, friends, and everything else, to go and contend for their country, right or wrong!

Not one man, or at least no soldier, that belonged to the General Division, can cease to remember what was vulgarly termed "musquit bread." Not a few maledictions were heaped upon the devoted head of the man that introduced it into the American camp. It was generally presumed that the General had it done, in order to save the American flour and crackers for his officers, but this we do not believe. In looking into the matter, and seeing where the supplies had necessarily to come from, we do not believe that the General was to blame for taking the opportunity of slipping in some Mexican flour, once in a while. It was next to impossible to keep up the supplies at this great distance from our depots.

Had guerrilla bands been as numerous then as they were a few months afterwards, we would have suffered much more; but "we were in for it," and of course we had to abide the consequences.

About this time coffee began to get very scarce, and half

rations only were issued to the troops. Thus they had to dispense with that brown beverage half the time, which caused still more complaints. We were now all beginning to feel what it was to be soldiers.

Sickness prevailed to an alarming extent in the camp, thus making duty very burthensome on those who still remained well. Having so many guards to keep up, it brought them on that duty at least every third day.

It was asserted by a correspondent of a certain newspaper that General Wool refused to furnish a hospital in town. As for the accuracy of this statement, we cannot vouch. If the General refused to grant the hospital, we believe he was induced by proper motives. We do know that when the army departed from Monclova, there was a hospital there. What length of time it had been in operation, we are unable to say.

CHAPTER VIII.

Description of the Country around Presidio—The Soil—Manner of Ditching—Cultivation of Corn—Indolence of the Inhabitants—Manner of Conveying Water—Farms without Enclosures—Agricultural Productions—Sheep, Goats, Swine and Neat Cattle—Mode of Cooking Victuals—Higher Class Condition of Neat Cattle—Sheep inferior—Timber on the Mountains—Country around Monclova—City of Monclova—Mills and Flour—Stores—Trade from St. Louis.

As nothing is transpiring in camp worthy of note, just at this time, we will beg the indulgence of our readers, and proceed to give a description of the country between Presidio and Monclova. We will not say much concerning the character of the Mexicans, except where necessity compels us, for so much has been said and written about them, that they have scarcely any character left.

The country from Presidio to the Sabinass is what may be termed one extensive prairie, or *plain*—for the contrast is so great between it and the beautiful savannahs of Texas, that the term prairie is hardly appropriate. On the latter, grass grows abundantly, with an occasional interspersion of large trees; but on the former, grass is very scarce, except on streams. As for timber, none is to be found, save a very inferior quality of musquit wood, a kind of shrub, something akin to our bramble bushes. In fact every bush, no matter what kind, bears thorns. Along the immediate banks of the Sabinass and Alamo, there are some tolerably good sized cypress growing, but they are of little use to the

inhabitants of the surrounding country, because those that are large enough for any use are generally so diseased as to be of little or no service. There is a species of the palmetto growing on the plains, which attains the height of twenty feet. It is sometimes used by the peasantry for making doors, &c., but is very pithy, and generally rots in the course of a year. Therefore we cannot call it wood.

The soil is extremely thin and poor on these plains, save where there is water; in such places it is very good, and produces well. It is commonly very sandy, and is so broken by incessant rains during the rainy season, that it holds out no inducements for emigration. The land which is fertile has to be ditched, in consequence of the long droughts, which last from August to June. It rains but seldom during this time, and what little there is, is of little consequence; but in June and July it rains continually.

The manner of ditching and flooding the farms is by digging a large or main ditch from some stream or spring, and in this way water is conveyed to and through a rancho. By this plan, a rancho of 200 acres can be watered in one day. We have seen water conveyed 40 miles, to some hacienda or village.

The inhabitants generally raise two crops of corn in the year, but, for want of attention, one good crop raised by an American farmer is worth both.

The people of this country are very indolent. They have no implements of husbandry, which accounts for the wretched culture of the soil, and the poor crops.

The Mexican farm has no enclosure, the stock being taken care of by shepherds or herdsmen. Very little trouble is experienced, except from droves of ranging cattle. To prevent their intrusion, small huts are built around the farm, at the distance of one-fourth of a mile, or less, according to the

extent of the farm, and in each of these a man is stationed, for the purpose of watching and driving off intruders.

The agricultural productions of a rancho, in this portion of Mexico, are commonly nothing more than corn and red peppers. The latter is one of their favorite vegetables. They use it in everything. We have seen a *pion* take his bowl of *chili*, manufactured into a sort of sauce, with some *tortillas* (corn cakes), of which he would make a hearty meal.

In the stock line, they raise goats, sheep, swine and neat cattle. Goat flesh forms their favorite animal food. When prepared for the table, it is cooked upon the naked embers, mostly broiled to a hard crust, so that all the strong offensive smell and taste, which is peculiar to goats, is removed. After it is cooked in this manner, they cover it with red peppers, which makes it, in their opinion, a very savory dish. We do not believe, however, that an American would relish it.

The higher class of Mexicans live better, and have more and different sorts of vegetables, such as the potatoe (but this is of an inferior quality), the cabbage, onions, &c. This latter root grows to an extraordinary size, but it is seldom eaten by the lower classes.

Their neat cattle are of a tolerably good kind, but in common very meagre. Their horses are small, but exceedingly hardy, and not unfrequently rather handsome. Notwithstanding the roads in Mexico are rough and rocky, they never shoe their horses. We have seen some of the cavalry trade or sell them a worn out horse, and the moment they could call him their own, they would tear the shoes off of his feet. If you ask the reason, they will say "*no buena*," meaning "not good."

Their sheep are much inferior to the American sheep in size and appearance, but their wool is of a very good quality —at least they make exceedingly fine blankets of it, so fine

that we have known more than one of them to sell for from fifty to sixty dollars.

The country from the Sabinass to Monclova is uncommonly mountainous. Timber is very scarce. The summits of the mountains bear what is termed "*pinon*," or pine, but it can hardly be attained, owing to the difficulty of reaching it. When this is done, the mountains are ascended by climbing from peak to peak, and by winding around them. The timber being cut, is rolled off, and then falls to the foot of the mountain. Sometimes it becomes so injured by the fall that it is of little use or value for any purpose. There are a few cotton-wood trees growing about the ranchos, but these, we opine, have in almost every instance been imported thither, for we have never seen any growing in a wild state.

The productions of the country between the Sabinass and Monclova are similar to those between Presidio and the Sabinass. The country immediately around Monclova is tolerably good, and the soil fertile. It produces well. We have seen corn and sugar cane growing very well. We have likewise seen some cotton growing here. It did not appear to be doing very well, but we suppose it was owing to a want of attention. We have been told that when it is rightly attended to, it produces equal to some of our Southern States. However, unless land can be obtained in the neighborhood of water, we do not think it would produce at all, on account of its being of a dry and sandy nature. Around Monclova, water is plenty. We must say that the crops in general looked better here than any we had previously seen.

The city of Monclova, the capital of the State of Coihulia, is situated between and in the midst of small hills and ridges, through which water is conveyed, by means of canals and ditches, from the main stream, which winds its way among the hills, about a mile from the city. We noticed several

flouring mills in the neighborhood, but they do not make good flour. We have before spoken of its quality. The population of the city is about 10,000.

There are some very fine stores in the place, kept by Mexican merchants, but they sell goods high. We saw a trader from St. Louis, who had married and was residing there. We asked him how he liked the country. "Like the country !" said he ; "that is something I never could do —but I got a right smart sprinkle of money by marrying the woman I did, and I contrive to fool these yellow fellows out of a great deal more—so I manage to live pretty comfortably." We asked him how the citizens liked our camping there. He said they liked it very well, for money was more plenty then than it ever was before, and that they could sell their produce for three times as much to the Americans as to their own people. This we did not doubt.

We have now said more about the country than we had intended at first, and have no doubt kept our readers in suspense long enough. We will therefore retrace our steps to camp, and observe what is going on there.

CHAPTER IX.

General Melee about the Corn Laws—Steel Mills—Delegates Assembled—A Speech made—Order Commanded—Speech Concluded—Committee Appears—Resolutions Read—The Indian—Meeting Adjourns—The Regular Insulted—Officer forms a Guard—Something about Corn—Prayer Meeting—Officer's Plan frustrated—Desired effect of the Corn Meeting—A Rumor—Express to General Taylor—Trick played on an Officer—Dialogue—Lariat and Spur—Discharged with an Admonition—Nine Ears of Corn.

It was now the 11th of November. A general melee was created in consequence of the celebrated corn laws having come into vogue, which we have no doubt our readers have already heard of. Great, indeed, was the excitement.

Steel mills had been provided (one for each company of the command) at San Antonio, in case an emergency should arise. The General having learned that the soldiers were making a great fuss about the Mexican flour, had concluded to try the effects of their grinding their own flour. Accordingly nine ears of corn were issued daily to eash man. The effect was horrible on the volunteers. They needed a Sir Robert Peel to advocate their cause, but so distinguished a peer they had not, consequently they had to substitute some other great man in his place.

One evening after nightfall delegates from the different companies of Rackensacks and Suckers met between the camp and camp guard, a sufficient distance from either, so as not to be heard, and then framed a series of resolutions for

the immediate repeal of the prevailing and obnoxious corn laws, that threatened a mutiny in the camp. After appointing a President, Vice President and Secretary, and other necessary officers, they proceeded with the business of the meeting, by appointing a committee to draft resolutions.

After the committee had retired to an adjoining cornstalk shed, which had been erected by a Mexican, for the purpose of watching a fodder stack, the President was called upon to address the meeting, although not until a resolution had been passed to let reporters have a chance. He arose, and after a cough and hem, which would have done honor to the greatest orator of the day, addressed the meeting as follows: "Fellow citizens: or, excuse me, if you please, fellow soldiers, as I should have said: It is a source of great satisfaction to me, to have the honor of addressing such an honorable body of delegates from the different companies of Arkansas and Illinois Volunteers as have met here on the present occasion. In the first place, gentlemen, I presume you all know what you have met for. You have met here in order to adopt measures to veto one of the greatest outrages ever attempted to be imposed upon a civilized people, namely, the corn laws now in force, which compel every man to draw and grind, with one of them all-fired, infernal, flambusted, penitentiary instruments called a steel mill, his rations of corn. Perhaps it was on one of them that Samson ground, after the Philistines had put his eyes out. Now fellow citizens—hem! horrible!—gentlemen, look at the impropriety of such a course. Just think of a man being so sick that he is unable to get out of bed, hem! excuse me, out of his blankets, having to grind nine ears of corn for his subsistence; is n't the idea shocking beyond anticipation? I wonder if these humbug officers"—[here a quick turning of heads might be seen in every direction, trying to ascer-

tain if any of those dignitaries were present]—"think that we are going to grind their corn for them. If they do, they are mistaken. They will have to treat us like the Philistines treated Samson if we do. Yes, gentlemen, they 'll have to put out our eyes before we will submit to such indignity and tyranny, I assure you. To think that we, men blest with health and strength, are going to risk it all by grinding corn for other people! The idea is preposterous. I tell you that we are a free and independent people, and have a right to express our opinions just as we please, when we are imposed upon." By this time some of the other volunteers had collected to hear the celebrated speech, and among them a regular, who had been travelling through the camp, and happened to get into the crowd. When he heard the last sentence, he exclaimed, "You are not free."

Vice President—"I say, order! order!" Some of the volunteers seeing that it was one of them 'tarnal regulars, as they termed them, very politely requested him to beat a retreat, otherwise it would not be wholesome for him. He made himself scarce immediately, and order being restored, our orator resumed his speech.

"I am sorry, gentlemen, that I have been interrupted in the middle of my discourse. We will have to meet with many obstacles before we obtain that great object which we are in pursuit of. Just think how they worked on our feelings three or four days ago, by giving us wheat bran, because it was no better [low murmurs of applause], and when they suspected they had us worked into that nice enough, what comes next? Why nine ears of corn are given to us, like folks in the United States feed their hogs, and we are told to grind them into corn meal, without having a sieve—so we have to eat hulls and all."

About this time the committee appeared, and the President

concluded by saying: "I hope that the honorable committee has framed resolutions that will put a stop to such nefarious and abominable proceedings. I return to you my sincere thanks for the good attention you have manifested during the time I was making the past remarks."

The President now sat down, not on a chair, but on the ground, amid smothered bursts of applause.

The committee then submitted the following resolutions to the Secretary, who proceeded to read them forthwith:

Resolved, That the object of this meeting is, to take measures for the immediate repeal of the corn laws now existing, much to the annoyance of the soldier.

After this resolution was read, our Indian, who was in the crowd, cried out: "I wish you would make a law to keep them from making innocent men bury dead horses, when they have them under guard."

President.—"Gentlemen, I wish you would keep better order."

Resolved, That this way of feeding volunteers on nine ears of corn per day, is unjust, and ought not to be tolerated by civilized people.

Indian.—"I suppose it is to be tolerated by Ingins."

President, [with a menacing gesture].—"Order I say, we must have order!"

Resolved, That we, the honorable representatives of the regiments of Illinois and Arkansas, will go to our respective captains, and prevail upon them to use their influence with the General, in order to effect the repeal of this obnoxious law.

Resolved, That when any one Captain refuses to use his influence with either General Wool or Shields, his name be taken down and kept as a living witness against him, until we are discharged, and that we then and there select a

man to give him the all-firedest whipping he ever got in his life.

Indian.—"Yes—and if one can 't whip him, I'll help."

President.—"If you do not keep order, I will have you put out of the hou— ; a-hem, I 'll have you sent to camp."

Resolved, That if the General will condescend and graciously repeal the existing corn laws, this body shall meet again, and return him a vote of thanks.

Resolved, That this meeting, having the repeal of the corn laws in view, adjourn now, *sine die.*

The regular, stung by the insult he had received at the hands of the volunteers, had in the meantime went to the guard tent and informed the officer of the guard, whose duty it was to disperse all crowds, and keep good order in the camp. He told him that a party of volunteers had met for the purpose of raising a mutiny in the camp, and that they had unceremoniously chased him off.

The officer, who was a regular, formed the guard immediately, and marched off, taking the informant with him, and arrived just in time to hear part of the last resolution, particularly the word corn.

Officer.—"What is all this crowd collected here for ?"

President.—"It is nothing but a prayer meeting. Seeing that sickness is so prevalent in camp, and so many dying every day, we thought we would hold a prayer meeting, and try to do a *leetle* better than we have done heretofore."

Officer.—"I thought I heard something about corn, as I was coming up."

President.—"O, that was Mr. Secre—a-hem. It was this gentleman of the Arkansas Regiment, who was just at prayers. He was saying that he hoped the Lord would let us have plenty of corn for our horses, and that our nine ears might be of a large size and good quality."

The officer was not to be put off in this manner. He commanded the guard to take them. The largest portion of the guard being volunteers, they of course did not care about taking their brethren. Thus a general row commenced, and the guard captured none. When the fuss was over, and the officer found none there save the guard and the informant, he marched him off to the guard tent, and kept him there all night, for satisfaction.

The corn meeting had its desired effect, for on the following day, one of the Illinois Captains being informed about the intentions of the volunteers, not to put up with it, waited till they had received their corn. He then ordered every man to pick up his nine ears, formed them into a line, and marched them out and said: "I will treat the man who throws the farthest—prepare to throw—throw!" Away went nine successive rounds, but no one knew who threw the farthest. The next day they had the great satisfaction of having the corn laws repealed, but whether the honorable representatives of the Arkansas and Illinois Regiments met and passed a vote of thanks we are unable to say.

This day, being the 13th, a rumor was current in camp that Captain Davis, bearer of despatches from General Wool to General Taylor, had been massacred, escort and all, by General Canales. This caused a great excitement, because by him we expected to gain information of when and where we would march. At this time it was generally believed that we would not go to Chihuahua, for Captain Porter and his command had returned, and reported that the road through the mountains was very bad.

It was now the 13th, and First Lieutenant Deshea, of Captain Porter's company, Arkansas Regiment, had been detailed to carry an express to General Taylor, with an escort of eight men. This was indeed a small body of men to go so

great a distance through an enemy's country, and that besides, when every one was impressed with the rumor that one party had already been cut to pieces. But we must say, in honor of that gallant officer, that he fearlessly undertook it. On the morning of the 14th he set out, with Sergeant B. F. Danley and seven men as an escort. Many looked on them as for the last time, and bade them a silent but final farewell.

This morning I was informed of a trick played off last night upon a regular officer, by a Sergeant of the Arkansas Cavalry. The Sergeant being on piquet guard, was sent into town about 11 o'clock at night, for the purpose of starting out all stragglers. After patrolling some time, he came across an officer, in company with a Mexican, and going at a great rate. The Sergeant charged on and overtook him. He stopped him, and ordered him off to camp immediately, when the following diverting dialogue occurred:

Officer.—"Are you a Lieutenant?"

Sergenat—"No; but I am acting under the orders of a Lieutenant."

Officer.—"What is his name, and upon what authority does he order officers out of town?"

Sergeant.—"I am not going to answer questions. Upon what authority he orders officers out of town, I do not know, but he told me to take everybody out, and so I will."

Officer.—"You will not take me."

Sergeant.—"Won't I, though? 'Tention guard; draw sabre! Now you had better go along without any trouble, for if you don't, we 'll have to do something to you that you will not relish."

Officer.—"Do what, you scamp? I 'll have you shot. I ain't a going to go now. You had better go on, or I will alarm the guard at the *plaza*."

While he was saying this, one of the guard was getting

a *lariat*, which he had to tie his horse with, into a position that it might drop very handsomely over a man's head, and catch him in a noose. Another was very calmly engaged in taking a large Mexican spur from his heel, which looked as though it was to be introduced into a gentleman's mouth, to effect the purpose of keeping him quiet.

Sergeant.—"So you won't go along peaceably, won't you? Bill, have you that rope ready?" On being answered in the affirmative, he said, "Drop it over, and Tom, you have that big spur ready, to prevent him from hallooing."

The terrified officer saw that he was bearded in his own den, and that he was placed in a pretty awkward predicament. He started to run, but the Sergeant was not willing to permit him to slip yet, so he ordered gallop, and had him surrounded, and the rope thrown around his body. The spur was also ready for his mouth, if deemed necessary.

He now saw that he had better go along quietly, and he told the Sergeant that if he would untie him, he would march along in peace. He was untied, the guard formed around him, and the men with the rope and the offensive spur walked on each side of him, with both the instruments in a threatening condition. In this manner they marched the unfortunate officer off to the camp, about a mile distant. It is needless to say that his Mexican companion had previously evaporated.

After marching the officer through the mud and water until they came within sight of the camp (having taken great precaution not to go within hearing of the regular town guard), he halted the patrol and said: "Look here now; we have escorted you this far, so I think you can find the road to camp yourself. You regulars pop it to us every time you have us in your power; so I have popped it to you this time, and you can either go back to town or to the camp,

just as you please ; but after this never endeavor to disturb prayer meetings again, in camp, or you might be trapped in a worse snap than this. Attention, guard—right—turn—gallop—march !" And away they scampered, leaving the mortified officer to do as he pleased, either to go to camp, or return and seek his Mexican guide. However, we opine he made choice of the former.

Our readers will recognize the officer as the one who broke up the corn law meeting, and the Sergeant as the gentleman of the Arkansas Regiment, who had prayed for the nine ears of corn to be of the largest size and very best quality.

CHAPTER X.

Cavalry and Dragoons to march—Pelonselas and the Wooden Leg—Experience a Norther—Joined by Major Borland—Ordered up by Daylight—Sufferings from the Cold—Entire Force—Rest and Draw Ten Dollars—Marched through Town—Our Indian used up—Lost his Tobacco—Encamped at a Hacienda—Captain Davis not Massacred—A Charming Place—Intense Heat—Food Improving—Fare tolerably well—Poor Beef—Troops Encamped and daily Drilled—Took up a small Cannon—General Shields and Colonel Harney—Sad Parting—Harney's Brass Band—Auld Lang Syne—Joined by the whole Command—Ordered to march—Destined for Paras—Six Month's Spent—Failure of the Project—Reflections.

Nothing occurred worthy of notice until the 16th, when an order was given for the Cavalry and Dragoons to be ready to march on the following day.

Wagons were being loaded by the Quarter Master, and everything appeared to be in a bustle. No one knew where we were destined to go. A report got into circulation that about eight thousand lancers were in the vicinity, and also a notion that Santa Anna had been in our camp, selling *pelonsellas*, in disguise. Every Mexican huckster was closely scrutinized, to see if he had the appearance of having a wooden leg.

On the night of the 15th we experienced a norther. Being very dusty in camp the blow on us was tremendous. Several tents were blown in every direction, and the inmates left to the fury of the blast, and to the merciless breath of old Boreas.

On the morning of the 16th, at 4 o'clock, we were joined by Major Solon Borland, Doctor John W. Glenn, Assistant Surgeon, and two Companies of Arkansas Cavalry, commanded by Captain Patrick and First Lieutenant Taylor, numbering 141 men. The aggregate force, counting some men who had been detained by sickness, and who now came up in this command, amounted to 164. They had been met by an express from General Wool, at the hot springs, at 8 o'clock in the evening, ordering them up by daylight the next morning.

No one can imagine how they must have suffered from the severity of the wind and cold. The troops were now all up, except Captain Hacker's company, being detained at San Antonio, to guard that place, and Captain Hunter's company of the Arkansas Regiment, and Captain Moore's company of the 1st Illinois Regiment, which were left at the Rio Grande, for the purpose of constructing a fort, of which we have previously spoken.

Our entire force was now in the field, with the exception of the above three companies. The whole number, including those on the sick list, made an aggregate of 2,688.

At 10 o'clock, A. M., four companies of the Arkansas Cavalry (Captains English and Dillord's companies being on a scout did not accompany us,) and one squadron of the 2d Dragoons, commanded by Major B. L. Beale, the whole under command of Colonel Archibald Yell, Arkansas Cavalry, were ordered to march—leaving behind Major Borland's command, to come up in the evening, in order to rest, and each man to draw ten dollars. We forgot to mention that the troops had been paid a part of their wages here. The Volunteer Infantry received three months' pay, the regular Dragoons and Infantry two months', and the Arkansas Regiments ten dollars to each man.

We marched through town, but it was very difficult work for the rear guard to get some of the volunteers out, because they wanted a little *aguadiente* before starting on a journey of which they knew nothing. But finally they all left town and went on. Being attached to this regiment, of course we had to accompany it.

Marching onward, we observed our Indian, whom we had not seen in camp that morning, with his face wonderfully used up. We enquired how he came to be so badly hurt. "O, I 'm a used up Ingin," said he. We asked him how. "Why, you see I understood that last night was the last one we were to remain in Monclova; so I thought I would just go to a fandango, and see what I could pick up by the way. I could not find a fandango myself, and I got some Mexicans to show me where there was one. So off we started, myself and four Mexicans. They took me up out of the main part of the city. I did not like to go, but they began to talk, and from what I could judge, they said the General would not allow fandangos in town. I went on, and just as we entered into an exceeding dark street, they all laid hold of me. I supposed I was a match for four Mexicans, any time, with my big butcher knife, but they came it over me this time. One fellow took my knife, but he threw it over a fence, to keep it himself, I suppose, for if he had wanted the others to have seen it, he would have stuck me with it. After that they commenced beating me, and the way they whipped me was a sin to General Wool. I tell you it was not slow. Three of them held me, and the other one pounded me. At last they dismissed me, and I left. I did n't run very fast, though. The first water I came across, I washed myself and felt my pockets. They had not taken any money from me, because I had none, but they took what was worse." We asked him what that was. "It is something you cannot

get out here; it was the last chew of tobacco," he replied. We told him he might get some more from the sutler. "No sir," he said; "he has none, and I 'm a used up Ingin."

In the evening we encamped at a small hacienda, about 12 miles from where we started in the morning, beautifully situated on the bank of a small stream. Nothing occurred worthy of notice, save that in the night an express arrived from General Wool, with orders for Colonel Yell to halt his command, and report at headquarters by 10 o'clock next morning. The General had received information that Captain Davis was not cut up. This, we presume, was the cause of our stopping. Colonel Yell reported according to orders, and he likewise received instructions to remain where he was, until further ordered.

This was a charming place. Everything appeared green. There were some large cotton-wood trees here, under the shade of which the sick remained during the heat of the day. We may here mention that the warm part of the day, during this season, is from 11 o'clock, A. M., to 3 o'clock, P. M., during which time the heat is so intense that it is almost impossible to endure it. From 3 o'clock, P. M., to 10 o'clock, P. M., it is comfortable—and from that time till sun-rise, you can lie under a couple of Mackinaw blankets without the least inconvenience. Thus our readers can form some idea of one of the causes from which diseases originate. There are also other causes, such as want of proper food, &c., &c.

Here food began to improve in quality, a train having come to hand with Major Borland, bringing provisions. We now commenced to draw one half American and the other half Mexican flour. Our rations of coffee were increased, and we also drew three fourths of a pound of bacon per man. with these additional supplies, we fared tolerably well. It was amusing, indeed, to see the men practising economy,

endeavoring to make their small allowance of bacon reach as far as possible. They generally boiled a small piece of it with the poor beef which we here received, in order to heighten its flavor, and then divided that piece of bacon among a mess of five or six men. In this way they managed to make it last a good while. Matters now began to assume a somewhat better appearance. The troops now encamped at the rancho or hacienda were employed in drilling on horseback in the morning, and on foot in the evening.

We also took here a small piece of cannon, about a four pounder, one of the men having discovered it covered up, apparently for the purpose of concealment. On being interrogated about it, the Mexicans replied that they had it there to defend themselves against the Camanche Indians, but this we do not credit, for we were informed of several pieces being in Monclova, but when the Mexicans heard of our approach they had them removed, and we believe this to have been one of them. It was, however, found to be of small value from its having once been exploded and the crevices filled up with lead ; so it was spiked and left.

It was now the 19th. On this evening Gen. Shields and Col. Harney came up with us, and it was now confirmed that Capt. Davis had really arrived and brought with him orders for those two officers to join Gen. Taylor, and they were then on their way, accompanied by a detachment of Capt. Dillord's company, Arkansas Regiment, under command of First Lieut. Foster, Arkansas Cavalry.

It was indeed a sad parting with the troops, for Col. Harney was beloved by the whole command. A great deal has been said about this man and his conduct on the frontiers, but his disposition here showed him to be of entirely a different nature and turn of mind from that generally represented. He was plain and mild in his conversation and man-

ners, and of a noble and commanding appearance, which endeared him to every man. He was never once known to be overbearing, although second in command, until we reached Monclova, and that amongst raw and undisciplined volunteers, but was ever ready to render justice when it was needed.

He had a brass band attached to his squadron of Second Dragoons, and, not unfrequently, after we had marched twenty-five or thirty miles, and the soldiers were worn down and fatigued, he would call his band out and strike up some lively air, as he alleged, to revive our spirits. Indeed it would revive any one's spirits, for, as it sounded through hill and dale with a double echo, it would call us back to the remembrance of former days, and every man would start with renewed and redoubled vigor and energy.

We understood that when he left Monclova, his favorite band not being permitted to go with him, they met and played for him his favorite tune, namely, "Auld Lang Syne." But we had to lose Col. Harney, and the Central Division lamented his loss as irreparable.

The next morning, the 20th, he set off for Monterey. Nothing happened worth noticing until the evening of the 22d, when we were joined by the whole command except Capt. English's squadron, Arkansas Cavalry, and Capt. Morgan's squadron, First Illinois Volunteers, who were left to guard the place and the sick who were not able to travel. The whole was under the command of Major Warren, First Illinois Regiment.

We were now ordered to be ready to take up the line of march on the following morning at four o'clock. That night the wind blew a perfect hurricane. The next morning we were all ready by the break of day, and set off, no one knew where, save the General himself. We were, however,

going somewhere, but not to Chihuahua, for we were not on the exact road to that point. However, before night we learned that we were destined to go to Paras, about two hundred miles from Monclova, and there to await orders from Gen. Taylor.

After about six months had been spent in collecting troops, obtaining supplies sufficient for such an expedition, and an immense wagon train and other necessaries, the Government likewise having spent an enormous amount of money, the troops drilled and every thing arranged to take that great city of Northern Mexico, the army is marched through a barren and unpropitious soil and climate for upwards of four hundred miles, and what is here now revealed to our *good looking* eyes? Why, the project had failed—the great army of Chihuahua had failed!

Had the troops, instead of being rendezvoused at an inland town hardly attainable, been sent into immediate service under Gen. Taylor, we are under the impression that our army would now have more foot hold in Mexico than it has; because, they would have reached the field in time to have participated in the capture of Monterey, and Gen. Taylor could then have advanced with more speed than he has done. But, as it is, they underwent twice the hardships and suffering that the troops of Gen. Taylor's Division did, and travelled about four times as far; all, all to take one town, which nine hundred men finally took, after having been one third more expense to the Government than any other division.

But we will not say much concerning these matters. If anything wrong has been committed, we will permit more efficient writers to discuss the subject with the Government at headquarters.

CHAPTER XI.

Encamped where Gold had been Washed—Water Good and Wood Plenty—Loud Complaints—Marched through a Barren Country—Encamped in a Swamp—Travelled Forty Miles Without Water—Troops Anticipate Suffering—Suffering from Thirst—Hard Heartedness of Teamsters—Arrive at Water—The Famished Soldiers Treated with it—Numbers Died—Mules Died in their Harness—Reflections—Express from Gen. Taylor—Encamped in a Ditch and Mexicans stopped the Water—Resumed the March—Palmetto, or Soap Plant—High Banks—Travelled Twenty-five miles—Cavalry—Advantage over Infantry—Large Fires in the Mountains—March Through Dry and Sandy Deserts—Sufferings Great—Encamp at a Tank—Plenty of Water Here—Disobedience of Saff Officers—No Mutiny—Place Assigned for Arkansas Regiment—Description of Disobedience of Staff Officers—Officers all Under Arrest—Officers March in Rear—No Water for Thirty-six Miles—The Infantry set out—March through a Sandy Plain—Come to Pure Water—Corn in Abundance—Arrival at Paras—Don Manuel—Mr. Jackson of Kentucky—The "Rico" invited the Officers—The Indian again.

On this evening the army encamped on a spot of ground where formerly there had been a place for washing gold. The house still remains and a worn out path up the mountain was pointed out as leading to the mine. The place for washing the ore is a large stone trough, through which the water runs; into this the ore is put and washed. While the gold sinks to the bottom the dust runs off.

The water here was tolerably good and wood was plenty; an article that had not been so plenty from the time of our arrival at Monclova until now.

Many were the conjectures this evening as to where we were destined to go, for many were not aware that we were going to Paras. We were not going to Chihuahua, that was one thing certain.

The next morning we were up, and after marching through an open barren country, as usual, we encamped on a sort of a swamp spring, where the water arose in a muddy or high grass swamp. It was exceedingly difficult to get horses near it on account of it being so boggy. Wood was very plenty here, musquit growing to some extent. Large fires might be seen springing up in every direction.

About eight o'clock in the evening orders came, announcing to us that we should be ready to march at four o'clock next morning, for we had to travel forty miles without water. The troops now began to anticipate some suffering, and well they might. None but those who have tried it know the suffering that we had to experience in travelling that distance, under an almost scorching sun, without water. But it had to be done, and so every man submitted to his fate, but not without complaints. Some, where they could not murmur at the General or some other officer, would curse themselves for being caught in such a scrape. There was some sense in this last expression.

At 4 o'clock the next morning, the drums beat and the bugles sounded, and the army was put in motion. We moved along very well, until about 10 o'clock, when the sun beamed on us with all its apparent power and wrath. The soldiers now began to suffer from thirst. Eleven o'clock came, and the heat increased, with redoubled fury. Some could now be seen falling back to the rear, but there they would meet with poor comfort, in the way of water, from the hard-hearted wagoners, who had provided themselves with plenty of it for sale. This day these wretches demanded a double

price for this indispensable article. We were told by one of the Illinois Volunteers that he had actually paid twenty-five cents for one drink of water. Many became so worn down that they would fall back altogether. Others would sit down and rest, and then proceed again. The men were ordered not to leave the ranks. Many who could get out no other way, would keep up as long as possible, then lie down in the middle of the road, and wait till the troops had passed, and then crawl off to the road side.

After experiencing all the sufferings the imagination could portray, from heat and thirst, a portion of the troops arrived at a stream of water, and fortunately it was good. Many rushed to it to quench their burning thirst, and drank to such an excess, that they were soon in a worse condition.

We pursued our march about three miles further up this stream, and then encamped. After the wagons arrived, and the mules were fed, they were forthwith turned back with water, not for sale, but to give to the suffering and worn out soldiers who were unable to walk, and had lain themselves down in despair. We have been informed that they went back 15 miles, and there found men lying, apparently in the agonies of death; but when they had water given them, by degrees they revived, and were then placed in the wagons and conveyed to camp.

Numbers died from the effect of that day's march. It was admitted by men who had been accustomed to the country, and who had travelled that same road before, that it was the hottest day they ever experienced. Mules would drop down in their harness and die instantly.

We remained here the following day, for the purpose of resting the men, horses and mules. That day, the 25th of November, 1846, is impressed with an indelible stamp upon the memory of all who yet live, who were concerned in the

adventures thereof. It will be remembered as long as a man of the Central Division survives—that is, by any who took part in that day's toils and privations.

On the 26th we were joined by Lieutenant Deshea, who had borne the express from General Wool to General Taylor. We were all rejoiced to see him and his escort back again; for we hardly ever expected to see them again when they left Monclova. We received some letters and papers by them, and also got information of General Taylor's advance on Saltillo.

The place where we were encamped was on a canal or ditch, which came 25 miles from a large stream. Some of the Mexicans, on the 26th, stopped the water about 10 miles above us, leaving us almost without it this day again. Gen. Wool despatched a party of dragoons up, and had the obstructions removed, which brought down the water very soon. Had the Mexicans refused to let the water have its course, they, in all probability, would have got the "sick headache." Our dragoons were not to be trifled with.

Next morning we resumed our march, and travelled through a valley between two mountains. This valley was apparently about nine miles wide, with nothing but palmetto or soap plant growing over it. This plant grows about two feet high, with stalks or branches growing out of it, exactly the shape of a bayonet—so much like that instrument that the soldiers applied the name of Spanish bayonet to it. It is extremely dangerous to ride a horse through it, where it grows very dense, because it is so sharp that it will pierce him shockingly, and the effects are so venomous that the wounds are hardly curable. The roots are used by the Mexicans for washing. The women will take three or four of the roots, pound them up, and wash clothes admirably clean. We were told by a Spanish lady that the suds of this root are

equal, if not superior, to those of the best rosin soap. But we have said enough in regard to the soap plant to inform our readers what it is. For a more accurate description of it, we would refer them to Gregg's "*Commerce of the Prairies*," where it is described at length.

We travelled along on the side of a creek, but from the height of its banks we were unable to procure any water. About nine miles from camp we obtained some with great difficulty.

It was night before we encamped this day. We had gone about 25 miles. We would have encamped sooner, but for the height and steepness of the banks of the creek, which prevented us from procuring water at a shorter distance. After getting into camp the cavalry had to go four miles for corn, to feed the horses and mules. Our readers will no doubt agree with us, that it is a hard task to travel twenty-five miles, then go four miles, load wagons with corn, and return without eating anything. Of course the whole body of cavalry did not go, but details were made; hence it fell a hard lot to some of them.

The cavalry have the advantage of the infantry, so far as travelling is concerned; but as to duty, the former have the heaviest share. The infantry, on coming into camp, have nothing to do but attend to their own comforts, and other necessary duties; but the cavalry have to procure feed for their horses, and attend to them, besides other ordinary duties.

Here we discovered some large fires in the mountains. They created some uneasiness, until the cause was explained by some Mexicans who had come to camp to receive payment for the corn they had sold to us. They said the fires had originated in some lead mines that were being worked.

The next day we reached a rancho by the name of San

Antonio. Here a rumor was started that the Mexicans had several American prisoners confined there, who had been taken at Monterey and kept concealed ever since. The volunteers became enraged, and in a few moments would have demolished the whole concern. However, the timely interference of some of the regular officers, who assured them that there were no prisoners there, prevented an "awful catastrophe." The boys on hearing this retired, each taking a piece of the destroyed cabins, as a recompense for his trouble, and as wood was extremely scarce, of course it came good.

We started the following morning tolerably early. Our march was through one of those dry and sandy deserts, now so well known to the soldiers. The suffering for want of water was as great as usual.

The place where we encamped in the evening was by the side of what is called a "tank," a place dug for the purpose of catching rain water during the rainy season. A tank is commonly dug in those large plains which require two days or more to cross them.

We neglected to mention before that there was a tank on one of the plains which we had crossed several days before (when so much suffering was experienced), but it was dry. However, there was plenty of water in the one at which we were now encamped.

This was the place where the mutiny occurred, which has been spoken of by some of our newspaper correspondents. It would have been better for them to have used their pens on some other subject. As to mutiny, there was nothing of the kind attempted. It was only disobedience of orders on he part of the staff officers of the Arkansas Regiment, and we are of the opinion that they were justifiable in what they did. Our readers may think we say so because we were

attached to that corps, and are inclined to be partial. But our object is, as we have said before, to give justice on all sides. We will now give the circumstances connected with it, and then permit the public to judge for themselves.

The position generally assigned to the Arkansas Regiment when encamped, was on the extreme left of the camp, and on being encamped on a stream, fronting towards it, the right of the encampment would be on the upper part of the stream, and of course that would throw the Arkansas Regiment on the lower part of it. After being used by the dragoons and artillery, for washing and watering their horses, it was very unpalatable, indeed.

The officers had put up with it until this time, under the impression it would be rectified; but on this occasion, being the last that came into camp, they proceeded as formerly to the left, and on arriving there found the water muddy and filthy as usual. Colonel Yell could brook this no longer. He immediately moved his camp further up on the tank, but on the other side, so that he was on a line with the extreme right, and there encamped. Scarcely had the tents been pitched when the Colonel received orders to remove his camp back again to the place designated for him. However, he only wrote a few lines to the General, stating the reason he had for encamping where he did—that he would not have his men imposed on any longer.

Immediately after this came an order for the Colonel's arrest, and also one for Lieut. Colonel Roane to take the command, and march the regiment back to its original position. But Lieut. Colonel Roane was the wrong man to send such a message to. He returned answer to the General that so soon as justice was rendered to the regiment, he would assume the command, and if that was done, he would not have reason to do so. He also was soon on the book of arrests.

Presently Major Borland received orders to appear at headquarters, which he did. What passed between him and General Wool we will not attempt to say, but he returned with less authority than when he went there. The staff officers were now all under arrest—hence the command of the regiment devolved on Captain Porter (being the oldest Captain in the regiment), which he assumed, and so the affair terminated, and the command remained in its newly assumed position.

The next day we marched, the officers under arrest in the rear, according to custom. About 10 o'clock we came to a delightful stream of water, running over some very rough rocks. It appeared good, and such it was—being the best we had yet came across since we left the rancho, ten miles from Monclova.

The General here learned that there was no water for 36 miles. He judged it best to encamp, and start next morning very early, for at that advanced hour of the day it would have been impossible to have got through. We therefore encamped where we were, and conjectured another day of suffering.

Accordingly, at 2 o'clock the following morning, the infantry set out, so as to proceed the greatest part of the way by the time the hottest period of the day came on. The cavalry remained behind, for the purpose of guarding the wagons, for things looked as if there were straggling bands of Mexican cavalry in the vicinity. We saw one place where they had encamped.

Our march this day was through another of those dry and sandy plains for about 12 miles, when we entered a sort of pass in the mountains. When we had travelled about a mile among the mountains, we suddenly came upon a small stream of pure running water. This was, indeed, unexpected.

Who it was told the General that there was no water for 36 miles, we know not; but whoever did so was mistaken. From appearances, the water came from a spring close by. It was not as fresh as our spring water in the United States, but it was very good. We now found water every two or three miles, until we reached camp. We encamped pretty early this evening.

Here we found corn in abundance—in fact it was one field as far as the eye could reach, belonging to a large hacienda in the neighborhood. We should have mentioned before that for the two previous evenings we had received no corn for our horses, but on this evening we had an abundance of it for them.

The next day we had 20 miles to march, which brought us within five miles of Paras. We arrived there without any other occurrences worthy of notice.

On the following morning we did not start until about 9 o'clock. After we had proceeded about a mile, we came to the hacienda owned by Don Manuel. This was truly the most splendid affair of the kind we had yet seen in this country. Grapes were cultivated here to a great extent. We here saw the first house built in the American style, that we had seen since our arrival in the country. Here we saw Mr. Jackson, of Kentucky, who was living there as a boss mechanic. On conversing with him, he told us that Don Manual was the richest man in that part of the country, and that he imitated and followed up the manners and customs of the Americans more than any other person among the Mexicans that he knew of. He said that with a few such men as Don Manuel, Mexico could soon be formed into a government similar to that of the United States.

We will here mention that the "Rico" invited the officers of the army to a glass of wine with him. As he did not

invite the volunteers, some very hard remarks were heard concerning him. Our Indian was heard to say that if he had any sheep or goats, he might find some of them missing one of these nights. This same Indian was generally a man of his word.

CHAPTER XII.

Encamped Three Miles from Town—A Visit from the Alcalde—Arrived at Paras—Sickness again in Camp—The Disobedient Officers Acquitted—Almost an Open Rupture—The Drunken Sergeant—A Draft taken of our Encampment by a Mexican supposed to be a Spy—Captain Preston's Company sent to Scout—Coffee again Withheld—Description of the Country about Paras and of the Town—Corn Luxuriant—Manners and Customs—How Wood is obtained—An Express from General Worth—The whole Army in Motion—The Cavalry, &c., go in Advance—Next Morning all under way—Accomplished Thirty-one Miles next Day—Encamped at Patos—Orders issued to make no Noise—All moved, taking a Circuitous Route—A False Alarm, and arrive at Agua Nueva—Cooked Nothing for two Days—Orders to March to Monclova—Inspecting and Reviewing the Troops—Report of Three Thousand Mexicans—Two Companies Started—Captain Hoffman's Retreat—Large Santa Fe Wagons—Wagons Crowded—Hoaxed Again—The Christmas Frolic—General Wool called a Coward—Retreated to Encantada—Joy Among the Troops—General Wool Removes his Camp to Agua Nueva—Arkansas Regiment ordered to Patos—General Wool moves his Camp to Buena Vista—Obtain a Hospital at Patos—The Indian's Escape—Next Morning saw his Exploits.

We arrived at the camp about 12 o'clock, and encamped about three miles from town, on ground that had once been a lake, but was now a large plain as far as the eye could reach. The plain where we encamped had several excellent springs, but the water was rather warm.

We were hardly in camp when the Alcalde and some more of the aristocrats visited us in three carriages, each drawn by two mules, which were driven without the use of

lines, but in the manner a Pennsylvania wagoner usually drives his team, namely, the driver sitting on the saddle or leader horse. Their carriages or coaches look more like mail coaches than any thing else, but they are built more old fashioned, the wheels being very large and strong, and the axletrees being sufficiently strong for any road wagon. Col. Hardin ordered his band out and they entertained them with some very fine music.

We arrived at Paras on the 2d of December, having left the hacienda twelve miles from Monclova on the 22d of November and arrived on the above, making ten days out, travelling nine days of this time, varying something over twenty miles per day, and experiencing more hardships than we had ever done before.

During our encampment here we will be as brief as possible, omitting details and things of no consequence, but imparting everything of interest. Sickness again prevailed in camp to a great extent. The measles broke out, and raged with great malignity, proving fatal to many in camp, and more so from the manner in which the troops were exposed. It was very seldom a man recovered after he had fallen into an aggravated state of the disease, and we have known cases where men have lain down in the evening and in the morning have been found choked to death, from the measels having struck in on them.

Captains Hoffman and Cadey's companies U. S. Infantry took their quarters in town on the 5th, for the purpose of forming a police. Capt. Pike's company, of the Arkansas Cavalry, were ordered out on scout. About this time, also, Col. Yell, Lieut. Col. Roane and Major Boreland had their cases investigated, and were restored to their respective offices.

An occurrence took place about this time which almost

caused an open rupture between the volunteers and regulars. On a Sunday some of the volunteers had procured their passports necessary to go into town. There was at this time a regular dragoon patrol, for the purpose of arresting those who had no passports; but the sergeant having obtained *aguadiente* by some means, had become intoxicated and undertook to compel all to go out of town passport or no passport. In the mean time he came across some of the men that had been in church, and ordered them to camp. A young man, who belonged to Capt. Pike's company of Arkansas Cavalry, and who had returned by this time, remarked to him that all who were there had their passports. The sergeant replied that he did not care whether they had or not, they should go. The young man said that he was not willing to comply with the orders until the time specified in his passport was expired. The drunken sergeant now drew his sabre and made a desperate lunge at him and cut the top of his cap. The volunteers, not having any arms, of course had to leave and proceed to camp, but there they armed themselves and went back to town and compelled the sergeant to surrender, brought him to camp and preferred charges against him, on which he was tried, found guilty, and reduced to the ranks. It was well that such a course was adopted, for, had any more coercive measure been employed, serious consequences might have ensued.

Nothing important occurred, until the 12th, when a Mexican was taken, who had been engaged in taking a draft of our encampment. He was adjudged to have been a spy, and the whole army were expecting to be marched out to witness his execution, but after investigating his case, he proved to be a Mexican artist. Liking the form of our encampment, he had taken the draft of it, for the purpose of displaying his genius. He was of course acquitted.

Captain John Preston's company were sent out about this time on a scout, but returned without making any discoveries.

While at Paras coffee was again withheld, and complaints became very general. Nothing very serious happened, however, until the 14th, when Captain Porter's company, Arkansas Cavalry, were sent out with four days' provisions, to reconnoitre the surrounding country. On the 18th, Captain Patrick's company, of the same corps, was also sent out on a scout.

We will now ask the indulgence of our readers for a few moments, in order to say something respecting Paras, and the country in its vicinity. The town is built similar to other Mexican towns of which we have spoken. Some of the houses are of a finer and more tasty quality than any we had yet seen—being built of white free stone, and two stories high. The church is a very fine one, but cannot be compared with the one at Monclova.

The country around Paras is better cultivated than any we had yet the opportunity of seeing. The corn appeared to be luxuriant. It was the second crop, which by this time was fit for roasting ears. We noticed grapes growing to a considerable extent, from which wine is made, of a tolerable quality, and sold at the neighboring towns.

The manners and customs of the Mexicans here are similar to those of other parts. On one side Paras is bounded by a long hill, and on the other by an extensive plain. Wood is obtained here as at Monclova, that is by packing it on donkeys. But the Quarter Master had some compassion on the troops here, and purchased the wood for them at Uncle Sam's expense.

On the 19th, about 4 o'clock in the evening, an express arrived from General Worth, at Saltillo, stating that the Mexican army was advancing on that place. In three fourths

of an hour from the time the express had arrived, the whole army was in motion. The sick, who were unable to travel, were taken to town and there placed in a hospital. Captain Porter's company of Arkansas Cavalry had not yet arrived. Orders were left for him to remain at Paras, in junction with Captain Hoffman's company of United States Infantry, to guard the sick that were left there, which were not a few. Captain Patrick's company, Arkansas Cavalry, had likewise not yet arrived, but he had sent in an express, stating his whereabouts. The bearer was forthwith despatched with orders for him to join the main body on the Saltillo road, by another route, which he did.

The cavalry, dragoons and artillery went in advance, and encamped eighteen miles from Paras. The infantry went about six miles, to the hacienda of Don Manuel, and there encamped.

The next morning we were under way before day—the cavalry, dragoons and artillery keeping about the same distance. In this manner we proceeded, and at night we encamped about the same distance apart. We were now on a forced march.

The second day, the 20th, we accomplished thirty-one miles. The next day we travelled about thirty-seven, the infantry having gained six miles on the advance, who encamped near a small town called Patos, of which we will have occasion to speak hereafter. This day the cavalry went about twenty-five miles, and halted at the rancho of San Juan, for what reason we do not know. The infantry went about the same distance, and encamped at the rancho of Muchachos.

Orders were now given not to create any noise in the camp, and word was despatched back to the infantry, forbidding the beating of drums at tattoo or reveille, because the

enemy were suspected to be in the immediate vicinity. The General was apprehensive that, if they were near, they would attempt to cut us off from General Worth.

The next morning the infantry came up with the advance. Captain Hunter's company, Arkansas Cavalry, and Captain Moore's company, 1st Illinois Volunteers, joined us here with a train of supplies. They had abandoned the ford of the river, and come in by the rancho of San Antonio, and thus came up with us, an express having previously been sent, instructing them to go to Saltillo.

The army now moved on—the Arkansas Regiment taking a circuitous route, for the purpose of reconnoitreing some of the neighboring passes. We proceeded about 10 miles, when it was discovered to be a false alarm, and the whole army turned to the right, and marched to the hacienda of Agua Neuva, where we encamped.

Thus we had marched about 125 miles in three days and a few hours. The advance cooked nothing for two days, save broiling a little salt pork over a few coals, and then eating it with a few crackers, and fed their horses with nothing but what dry grass they could pick up, until they reached the rancho of San Juan. The infantry fared better, for they had the train with them.

We arrived at Agua Neuva on the 23d of December. On the same day Captain Pike's squadron, Arkansas Cavalry, received orders to march to Monclova on the following morning, in order to reinforce Major Warren, and with orders for him to come up immediately. This was indeed a heavy duty for the men of that squadron, but they cheerfully prepared for the march, and accordingly on the morning of the 24th set off on their journey. On reaching Saltillo, through which place they had to go, they were ordered to remain with Major General Butler, who was in command at that

place, assigning for his reason that Major Warren had force enough.

The 24th was occupied in inspecting and reviewing the troops. In the evening an express arrived from Captain Hoffman (then at Paras), with information that 3,000 Mexicans were advancing on that place, and that he would have to be reinforced, or he would not be able to get away all the sick that were there. Captain Eustus' company, Regular Dragoons, and Captain Danley's company, Arkansas Cavalry, received orders to proceed to that place immediately.

Accordingly those two companies started about dark on the evening of the 24th, accompanied by some wagons, for the purpose of transporting the sick. They travelled about thirty-five miles this night, and on the morning of the 25th met Captain Hoffman in full retreat, the Mexicans in Paras having assured him that if he did not depart forthwith, he would be attacked by an immense force. After holding a consultation with his officers, he concluded that it was best to evacuate the place. Every preparation was made, and by pressing into service a couple of large Santa Fe wagons, which had been purchased by some "*rico*," or wealthy Mexican, they were enabled to bring away all the sick, except twelve, whose cases were too aggravating and dangerous to allow of their removal. The priest promised to take care of them, which promise he faithfully performed.

The wagons were crowded—fourteen being put in each. It must have been shocking for so many sick men to have been thus crowded together. With the assistance of the wagons which had accompanied the reinforcement, they were somewhat relieved, and came on to the rancho of San Juan, where they encamped. Here they learned that they had once more been hoaxed, and the whole affair turned out to have been a false alarm. It was undoubtedly a piece of

Mexican stratagem to have our men to evacuate the town as fast as possible, for of course American soldiers were not very welcome guests with them.

On this day, Christmas, the army had their Christmas frolic, which was another general *stampede*. Mr. Dyer, beef commissary, had learned from his Mexican butcher that a sergeant of the Mexican army had been in camp, looking at our situation. Colonel Yell, with his remaining four companies, had been sent out to a place named Dogtown, on the San Luis Potosi road, while General Wool commenced his retreat towards Saltillo. Here it was that he was publicly called a coward, and published as such by some petty correspondents of newspapers, who would have been better employed in attending to their duties, than penning such falsehoods.

It would have been impossible for General Wool to have withstood an overpowering force here with his small command, hence he deemed it advisable to fall back to a stronger position. He retreated as far as the rancho of Encantado, where he discovered the hoax, and halted. Here he was joined by Captain Pike's Squadron. He encamped on the night of the 25th, sending orders to Captain Hoffman to remain where he was until further orders.

It was rumored in camp that the divisions of Wool and Worth were to be united, and Major General Butler to take the command in person. A great deal of joy was manifested by the troops on hearing this news, because they judged they would not be subjected to the consternations caused by so many *stampedes*, with such a force.

On the 26th, General Wool moved his camp back to his former position at Agua Neuva. Captain Hoffman now received orders to join the command, which he immediately did.

Next morning the Arkansas Regiment was ordered to march to a small town called Patos, about forty miles back on the road to Paras, for the purpose of recruiting the horses, corn being abundant at that place. We, being attached to that Regiment, had of course to accompany it, but through the kindness of a friend, we were enabled to obtain the proceedings of the whole Division. The Arkansas Cavalry arrived at Patos on the 28th, and went into camp.

On this day General Wool removed his camp to the rancho of Buena Vista, about six miles south of Saltillo. About this time General Taylor received orders to send his regulars to General Scott, and Brigadier General Worth was ordered to accompany them, leaving General Wool in command of the post of Saltillo. General Butler was about returning to the United States for the benefit of his health, and Major Bonneville's Batallion, consisting of Captains Hoffman's and Cady's, and Lieutenant L. Wetmore's companies, 6th U. S. Infantry, and Captain Williams' company of Kentucky Volunteers, left for General Scott's headquarters.

The Arkansas Regiment, at Patos, obtained a hospital in town for the sick, who began to recruit in health the moment they were under shelter.

Our Indian met with a most miraculous escape during the time the regiment was on the road to Patos. Having lagged behind for the purpose of ascertaining what he could pick up, he came to some thick chaparals, where some Mexicans fired on him and shot his horse from under him; he then ran to some bushes not far distant, and there remained until dark, the Mexicans firing at the bushes all the time and he firing at their place of concealment. Occasionally, he said, the balls came mighty near him, and he thought he was a gone Injin, sure enough. However, after dark, the Mexicans ceased firing and he waited until he was tolerably certain that

they were gone, when he crept forth, but did not go near his horse, for he knew it was all up with him, as he heard the wolves quarrelling about the choice pieces, but took the back track and came through gullies and ditches until he found the camp. We remember having seen him after his return; he looked uncommonly dejected, and said he must have killed one of them Mexicans, for he heard him holler.

The next morning, Lieut. J. M. Giles, of Capt. C. C. Danley's company, took an escort, and the Indian for a guide, and proceeded to ascertain what exploits Mr. Indian had achieved, and, really, on coming up to the place, there lay the horse half eaten up by the wolves, and on examining the bunch of chaparals which had contained the Mexicans, they found from all appearances that he had either killed or wounded one of them, for the ground was very bloody. After this our Indian endeavored to use more prudence and precaution when he fell behind.

CHAPTER XIII.

Things Went on Very Well—Clothing for the Arkansas Regiment—Express Arrived—Report about Santa Anna—Gen. Wool Remained at Buena Vista—Patrol Sent Out—Major Gaines Joins—Majors Gaines and Boreland Captured—Interpreter of Major Boreland—Remarks about Several Officers—Major Warren Arrived—The Central Division all Up—Great Joy among the Troops—Two Squadrons called in—Major Warren Appointed Governor of Saltillo—Gen. Taylor Arrived—The First Mississippi Riflemen and Others Encamped at Agua Nueva—An Occurrence—Remarks Respecting it—Relation of the Occurrence—Court of Inquiry Respecting it—Matters Rested undecided—Gambling the Order of the Day—Gen. Taylor's Introduction to the Rackensacks at a Gambling Scene—Reconnoitreing at Encarnacion—Discover Marks of the Enemy.

THINGS went on very well in both camps. Gen. Wool remained at Buena Vista, a dragoon piquet was stationed at Agua Nueva and Col. Yell remained at Patos. The troops spent a better New Year than Christmas.

On the 7th of January, 1847, Captains English's and Dillord's companies, Arkansas Cavalry, came up with the regiment at Patos, escorting a large train, which brought along the clothing for the Arkansas Regiment, of which it stood in need not a little. They presented a very shabby appearance before, but now, with their dragoon uniforms, they looked remarkably well.

On Sunday night, the 10th, an express arrived from the General, ordering up the Arkansas Regiment, and also stating that Gen. Santa Anna was supposed to be within three days'

march of Saltillo. Accordingly, on the morning of the 11th, about 4 o'clock, they started, thinking that after being fooled so often, they would without fail have a fight this time. They went through against 3 o'clock, the distance being about forty miles, but here they found everything quiet, the men in that camp believing it to be a hoax.

Gen. Wool remained at Buena Vista, while six companies of the Arkansas Regiment were ordered to encamp at Encantado. Capt. Pike's squadron was ordered to encamp at Agua Nueva and Capt. Patrick's squadron at San Juan Vaqueria. All the above places were about fifteen miles from the main army and were passes that had necessarily to be guarded. Patrols were sent out daily from the six companies at Encantado to scour the country, because, from all we could judge, there were armed bodies of Mexicans somewhere in the neighborhood.

Things went on at this rate until Major Gaines, of the Kentucky Cavalry, which had previously joined us, and Major Boreland, of the Arkansas Cavalry, were out on a scouting excursion, and met at the hacienda of Encarnacion, where they were captured.

So much has already been said about this, that we think it unnecessary to add anything more. The only statement we have is from Capt. Henrie, Interpreter of Major Borland, who made his escape, and by a letter of one of the parties which found its way into the United States. We will have to wait until their release for an authentic account, for our readers are well aware that with them there is talent sufficient to do justice in the case.

The officers who were taken from the Arkansas Regiment were Major Borland, Capt. C. C. Danley and Capt. Henrie, interpreter, who subsequently made his escape and returned. After the capture of Capt. C. C. Danley, the command of

that company devolved upon First Lieutenant N. T. Gaines. The reason we mention this is, because we shall have occasion to speak of this company hereafter.

About this time Major Warren arrived from Monclova with his command, to which was now attached Capt. Hacker's company, Second Illinois Volunteers, which had been left at San Antonio to guard the place. He had come to Monclova with a train, and from thence with the above command.

The troops of the Central Division were now all up, and the communication between San Antonio and the army stopped. About this time we heard that Gen. Taylor had arrived at Monterey from Victoria, and that he was coming to take command in person. Great was the joy of the troops upon hearing this, for they had heard ao much of old Rough and Ready, that they all wished to see him. He remained at Monterey until about the 2d of February, when he removed for Saltillo, bringing all the troops but a small force left to garrison the place.

About this time the squadrons at Agua Nueva and the one at San Juan de Vaqueria had been called in, and Capt. Pike's squadron of Arkansas Cavalry had been sent to a pass twelve miles from Saltillo, by the name of Polomos, to prevent surprise from that quarter.

Major Warren was appointed Governor of Saltillo, and immediately proceeded to garrison the place with two companies of the First Regiment Illinois Volunteers.

On the 4th, Gen. Taylor arrived and encamped at Saltillo, and on the 5th he moved and formed a junction with Gen. Wool. On this day six companies of the Arkansas Cavalry were ordered to proceed to rancho San Antón, about sixty miles distance, to procure corn.

On the 9th, the whole army, under the command of Major

General Taylor, moved out to Agua Nueva. Now the Central Division became extinct, and was heard by that name no more; but we will endeavor to give an account of what finally became of it. The following are the names of the different corps that joined us in company with Gen. Taylor, viz: The First Mississippi Riflemen, under the command of Col. Davis; the Second and Third Indiana Regiments, under command of Colonels Bowls and Lane, the whole under the command of Brigadier Gen. Lane; the Second Kentucky Regiment, under Col. McKee; one squadron of the Second Dragoons, under command of Brevet Lieut. Col. May; and Capt. Bragg's Battery of Light Artillery. This force was now encamped at Agua Nueva. We will not say much in future respecting the above named corps unless necessarily obliged to do so, because we have engaged to confine ourselves to the Central Division, and we will endeavor to redeem our promise.

About this time an occurrence took place which called down the disapprobation of the commanding general. Certain newspaper correspondents have commented on it rather freely, but we think when the public have read the facts, just as they were, they will be inclined to think that those men who committed the tragedy were justifiable. The statement we are about to make may be depended on as correct. Being a member of the same regiment, we would not have our readers think that we are partial. We but give the naked facts as they occurred. So much has already been said about it that is not true, that we feel ourselves bound to refute some of the base slanders and lies in relation to it. The circumstances are these.

On the 9th of February, S. Colquit, belonging to company B., commanded by Lieut. Gaines, Arkansas Regiment, left camp for the purpose of training a Mexican horse, which he

had just bought. It was noticed that he did not return at dark, and fears began to be entertained for his safety. Morning arrived, and he was still absent. It now became the general belief that he had been *lariated*. A small party of men started out in search of him, but returned without him. It happened that a man of the Kentucky Cavalry was out this morning in hunt of his horse, and in his walks came across the missing man. He forthwith started for the Arkansas camp, and told them where the object of their search was. Upon this some of the men went to the place pointed out by the Kentuckian, and there found their comrade, who had fallen a victim to the brutality of some murderous ranchero. A *lariat* was around his neck, sunken or partially covered in the flesh. He was sitting against a small bush, with the *lariat* tied fast, and the other extremity fastened to a shrub some distance off. On examination of the ground, it appeared that he had been dragged about three hundred yards, over stones and prickly-pears, and when they tied him to the bush, he could not have been quite dead, for one of his hands was in a position which showed that he had tried to disengage his neck from the rope. It was horrible! There sat the most awful looking object that the imagination could picture. He was perfectly black, and his body bruised and mangled in a most shocking manner. The sight was enough to raise feelings of revenge and resentment in the breast of any one who had the least feeling and sympathy for his fellow countryman. The body was brought into camp, and after it had received a soldier's burial, the men collected together and agreed to go in search of the perpetrators of this black-hearted deed. There were but two companies of the Arkansas Regiment in camp, viz: Companies B. and G., the one commanded by Lieut. Gaines, and the other by Capt. Hunter. A portion of these companies saddled their horses

and started off, undoubtedly with the intention of meteing out a sanguinary retribution on those blood-thirsty miscreants of the *lariat*, but we must here remark that it was entirely unknown to either of those officers. We received the particulars from one of the party, in whom we could place implicit confidence. We were on duty at the time, and could not accompany them, otherwise we might also have been of the party. They proceeded up into the gap of a mountain, where Mexicans had been seen. On reaching the spot, they discovered some rancheros, living in small huts, but nothing like a rancho appeared. Our men searched some of the huts, in one of which they found the identical carbine sling belonging to the murdered man. They knew it from the fact of its having his name on it. The Mexicans had by this time collected together, near one of the huts. Our men enquired of them, through a young man who spoke Spanish, how they came by the sling, but they gave no satisfactory answer.

At this moment one of the men shot a Mexican. Firing now commenced in good earnest, and in rapid succession. General Wool heard it, and sent Captain Crow's company of 1st Illinois Volunteers, to ascertain what was the cause. On coming up, Captain Crow, as he afterwards stated, saw between twenty-five and thirty dead Mexicans—men, and not *women and children*, as some trifling correspondents thought to shed a refulgent lustre on the productions of their pens by stating. As to women and children, there were none present. We do not think that during the whole march of the Central Division, any one belonging to it ever heard of a woman or child being murdered. If such atrocities were committed, no one is the wiser of it.

The Arkansas men returned, but not under guard, for the gallant Illinoisians knew too well the cause which led them

to what they had done, and so did not attempt to arrest any of them. A court of inquiry was held by General Taylor, for the purpose of investigating the affair. We are far from censuring him for what he did, for it was nothing more than his duty. At this court, a man by the name of Peacock, who had been out in that direction, in order to procure beef cattle, and who had been drawn thither by the firing, stated that he saw dead Mexicans, and likewise men of the Arkansas Regiment, but he could recognize no one in particular. Several men who were witnesses, on giving their testimony, stated nothing that led to a discovery of any of the party implicated. Hence, the only course the General could pursue, to clear himself, was to punish them all together. He sent word to the officers that if they did not give up the offenders, they might hold themselves in readiness to march to the Rio Grande. This was impossible, for they knew not the real party. We believe, however, that if they had known them, they would have been willing to suffer alike with the men. They were impressed with the idea, like ourselves, that any one who had seen the murdered man, and could not feel himself inspired with the feelings of revenge, was not the man qualified to be in Mexico. Here the affair rested.

It was now the 17th of February, and the six companies of the Arkansas Regiment had returned from the rancho of San Antonio. This day the troops were paid off, the Arkansas troops drawing six months pay, and the Illinois troops four.

Gambling was now the order of the day in camp. Money was plenty, and the troops did not know what else to do with it, at least such was the case with the majority. One could not pass through the camp without having his ears saluted with "Click, click, here is a game you all can win at."

A fellow might be seen sitting with a blanket spread out before him, with cards displayed thereon, and himself shaking a chuckeluck box into fits.

The Rackensacks and Suckers had places where they assembled for the purpose of gambling. We were told that it was at one of these places that General Taylor got his introduction to the Rackensacks and Suckers. We were not present, and therefore cannot vouch for the truth of the assertion. He was taking a walk one evening through the camp, and came butt up against one of these "sanctified courts." He stopped awhile, surveying the scene around and before him. At this moment an officer came up and saluted him by saying "Good evening, General!" Every eye was immediately turned in that direction, and sure enough there stood the General. Such a running, and such a demolishing of faro banks and chuckeluck boxes had not previously been seen. In fact, in less time than we can describe it, every man had disappeared, and the General and his friend left alone to enjoy a laugh at their expense.

It was now the 20th, and a part of the Arkansas Regiment, under Lieut. Col. Roane, two squadrons of dragoons under command of Brevet Lieut. Col. May, and one piece of Capt. Washington's Artillery, under command of First Lieut. O'Brien, were sent to reconnoitre at Encarnacion, but did not go any further than Dogtown, where they discovered strong marks of an enemy in the neighborhood, and thinking it unsafe to go farther, returned that same night.

CHAPTER XIV.

Confirmation of a Mexican Force in the Neighborhood—The whole Army in Motion—Col. McKee kept at Encarnacion—Gen. Wool Proceeds to Buena Vista—Wagons to bring in the Remainder of the Stores—Alarm Taken and Times Look Squally—Rancho on Fire—An Awfully Grand Scene—Santa Anna's Stratagem to Hold up—Orders Given, but Helter Skelter was the Order—Arrival at Buena Vista—Snugly in Blankets—The Enemy in Sight—The Gallant Suckers—The Army in Line to Meet the Foe—Yankee Doodle—Remarks Concerning the Battle—Description of the Battle.

On the morning of the 21st it was confirmed that a large Mexican force was marching to attack us, and orders were issued to march immediately. All the troops now struck tents and were ready to go. Many were the conjectures as to where our destination was, and some said that we were about to retreat to Saltillo. Directly the whole army was in motion and off, except the Arkansas Cavalry under command of Col. Yell, who were ordered to remain at Agua Nueva to guard some stores that were left there until wagons could return for them.

Col. McKee, Second Kentuckians, with one section of Artillery, were kept at Encantada, for the purpose of assisting Col. Yell in his retreat should the enemy come upon him. About three miles from Encantada, the First Illinois Regiment, under Col. Hardin, was kept to guard what was termed the pass. Gen. Wool proceeded to Buena Vista and there encamped. Gen. Taylor continued at Saltillo, along

with Lieut. Col. May's squadron Second Dragoons, and Capt. Sherman's and Capt. Bragg's Batteries of Third Artillery.

During the evening Col. Yell was joined by the Kentucky Cavalry and a squadron of the First Dragoons, under command of Col. Marshall, and wagons to take in the remainder of the stores, with orders for Col. Yell, that if the enemy came upon him to destroy all that remained. Accordingly the wagons were loaded as rapidly as possible, but about midnight the piquets were fired upon and came running in, except the one at rancho San Juan, which was ten miles distant. A man was accordingly started for that station, but was never heard of afterwards.

Such an alarm as there was we never before witnessed. Wagons were running in every direction; some became locked together and the teamsters did not wait to part them but ran away, supposing the enemy to be just upon us. Some of the men had lost their horses and were in a dilemma. We had broken open some barrels containing sour crout in the evening, and we observed an old German filling two haversacks. He, meantime, had lost his horse and was in an unpleasant situation, but would not lose his crout. We saw him with his two haversacks around his neck, and asked him why he did not leave it and take care of his clothes? "Oh! py sure," said he, "dish ish besser dan de clothes, and if I could find dat ole hause of mine, I would run away faster as dunder and blitzen!"

In the mean time the rancho was set on fire, as was also a large stack of wheat, which sent forth a lurid glare upon the darkness of the night. It looked awfully grand and sublime, indeed, and had the Mexicans been within six hundred yards they would have been almost compelled to halt and admire the scene.

The troops were formed fronting the rancho, but far

enough back, so as not to be seen by any who came that way, but within proper gun shot. In this position we remained about two hours, awaiting the approach of the enemy to give them a cordial welcome with our carbines and then leave. But they did not show their countenances, and it appeared as though they were trying to surround us, which they might have done had they attempted it, but Santa Anna hearing the previous rattling of the wagons, judged we were about giving battle, and thus held up. This he told, after the battle, to one of our despatches who visited him in his camp.

Orders were now given to march off in good order; but good order there was none. Away went the volunteers, helter, skelter! All the crying out to halt was of no consequence, and had the Mexicans indeed surrounded us, they could not have withstood the charge. When we arrived at Encantada, Col. McKee came out and accompanied us in.

We arrived at Buena Vista about 4 o'clock, A. M., and in a few minutes every man was snugly ensconced in his blanket, where, we have no doubt, some were dreaming, not of a *stampede*, to which they had become accustomed, but of a real genuine fight.

About 9 o'clock the alarm was given that the enemy was in sight. This we could judge from the movements of the First Illinois Regiment, which was stationed at the pass, where they they had thrown up a parapet or breastwork, on top of which stood the gallant Suckers cheering him as he approached. Truly, he must have felt strange, thinking that we were in full retreat, on coming up, to receive such a salute.

In a few moments the whole army was in line and marched off to meet the foe. Great was the ambition and valor manifested that morning, as the drum and fife stirred up that old fashioned and enthusiasm-giving air, Yankee Doodle; it

seemed to inspire every man with new vigor and courage for the affray. The time long-looked-for by the boys of the Central Division, (now termed the "Sleepy Column,") was rapidly approximating, and they were eager to improve it and come up to it to a man. We have no doubt Gen. Wool looked with feelings of pride on that little band, who had shared the toil and suffering of a six months' march through a barren country with him.

We did not intend to give an account of the battle of Buena Vista further than the different corps of the Central Division were concerned; but we have been requested to give a full account, and we will endeavor to do it to the best of our ability, and permit our readers to refer to other reports for its correctness. When we speak more particularly of any of the corps of the before-mentioned division, our readers must not censure us with being partial because we notice the immediate movements of this more than any other corps, not intending, as before observed, to give a full account of any other.

On the morning of the 22d, the troops were stationed as follows: Capt. Washington's Battery was placed to guard the pass, where a ditch had been dug across the road and a redoubt had been thrown up extending to the edge of a large gully; a narrow passage was left next the hill which was obstructed by a couple of wagons loaded with stones. The Second Kentucky Infantry, commanded by Col. McKee, was stationed on a hill immediately in the rear of Capt. Washington's Battery. Lieut. Col. Weatherford with two companies of the First Illinois Regiment occupied the breastworks on the right of Capt. Washington's Battery. The remaining six companies of the First Illinois Volunteers, under command of Col. Hardin, were posted on an eminence to the left of Capt. Washington's battery. The 2d Illinois

Regiment, to which was attached Capt. Conner's (formerly Capt. Seefeld's) company of Texas Foot Volunteers, was placed on the left of the Kentucky Regiment. The Indiana Brigade, composed of the 2d and 3d Regiments, commanded by Colonels Bowls and Lane, the whole commanded by Brigadier General Lane, was posted on a ridge immediately in rear of the front line. Capt. Stein's squadron of the 1st Dragoons were held in reserve in rear of the Indiana Brigade. The Kentucky Cavalry, under command of Colonel Marshall, and the Arkansas Cavalry, under Colonel Yell, were stationed to the left of the second line, towards the mountains. The rifle companies of these two regiments, together with the cavalry companies of the Kentucky Regiments, and a battalion of riflemen from the Indiana Brigade, commanded by Major Gorman, the whole under command of Colonel Marshall, were ordered to take post on the extreme end, at the foot of the mountains.

About this time General Taylor arrived from Saltillo, accompanied by Col. May's squadron of the 2d Dragoons, Captains Sherman and Bragg's batteries of Artillery, and the Mississippi Riflemen.

The enemy halted just beyond cannon shot, displaying his strength on both sides of the road, and began to push his light infantry into the mountains on our left (his right). This movement of the enemy appeared as if he were determined on making a demonstration on his left. This induced Gen. Taylor to despatch the 2d Kentucky Infantry and Capt. Bragg's battery of Artillery, supported by Capt. Pike's squadron of Arkansas Cavalry, which had previously been called in from Polomos Pass, to take part on the right of the gullies, and in advance of Captain Washington's battery. Captain Sherman's battery was held in reserve, in rear of the second line.

The enemy was now discovered pushing his infantry to the heights on our left, for the purpose of gaining that position on us. Colonel Marshall, with his regiment, and four companies of Arkansas Riflemen, under Lieut. Col. Roane, and the Indiana Rifle Battalion, under command of Major Gorman, were sent to meet this party. Brigadier General Lane, with the 2d Indiana Regiment, and a section of Capt. Washington's Artillery, under Lieut. O'Brien, was ordered to the extreme left and front of the plain, which terminated by a deep ravine, running from the mountains to the road, with orders to prevent the enemy from coming around the base of the mountain.

At 2 o'clock, P. M., the enemy opened a fire on our riflemen with a long howitzer posted in the road. About 4 o'clock Col. Marshall engaged the Mexican infantry on the side of the mountain. The firing continued on both sides until dark. In this skirmish, the loss on our side was one man wounded, while that of the enemy was known to have been great, by subsequent inspection of the ground. It was here that the Indiana men tested the value of the revolving rifles. There were two companies armed with these guns, and when the Mexicans commenced firing, they reserved their fire until the Mexicans got pretty bold. Previously they had kept behind a sort of eminence, but seeing that the Americans did not return the fire, they ventured out and came over the ridge. At this juncture the Indianians opened on them. They stood the first and second fires very well, but the third and fourth came in such rapid succession that they looked terrified, and by the time the sixth was hurled on them, there was not one to be seen on the ridge.

When the firing had ceased, General Taylor returned to Saltillo, to arrange affairs at that place, and to guard against General Minon and his cavalry, taking with him the Missis-

sippi Regiment, and a squadron of the Second Dragoons.

The troops remained under arms during the night, in the position they occupied at the close of the day. About 10 o'clock, P. M., Lieut. Tomlin, of the Arkansas Regiment, came in with his piquet. It will be remembered that this was the piquet which was not fired upon on the proceeding evening, and had remained out. The express that had been sent for him never arrived. We obtained the particulars as to how he got past the Mexican camp and came to ours, from himself. He remained at the rancho of San Juan until the usual time of relieving the guard, but no one came. He had seen the light of the fire on the night of the 21st, but hearing no guns fired, concluded it was dry grass, which is a common occurrence in that part of the country. He waited, however, until about 10 o'clock on the 22d, when he judged he could come in. He started, but had not proceeded far, when he met a Mexican, of whom he enquired about the Americans. The Mexican told him that the Americans had left, and Santa Anna was at Agua Nueva. On hearing this news, he felt himself somewhat puzzled, but nothing daunted, he continued his journey in the direction of Saltillo, saying that if the enemy discovered him, he would have an opportunity of trying the speed of Rackensack horses with those of the Mexicans. He came on about five miles, and discovered what proved to be the flank guard of the enemy. They, however, looked so much like United States Dragoons at a distance, that he thought them to be really such, and made towards them. But on approaching pretty near, he discovered his mistake and began to retreat, and the Mexicans took after him; but Mexican horses would not answer their purpose, for he was soon out of their reach. The enemy returned to the former route, and he kept along parallel with them, intending to take advantage of the deep gullies,

and get past, but on coming within sight of them, he discovered the Mexican army, encamped right at the head of him at Encantada. So he made a movement to the left, to get behind a small ridge near him, where he expected to find a way by which he might be enabled to reach Saltillo. The Mexicans discovered this movement also, and gave chase, but Rackensack horses were again victorious. As he ascended the hill, he and his companions gave three cheers, and beckoned to them to follow, but conjecturing it, as we presume, to be a Yankee trick, to decoy them, they returned to their camp, and our hero pursued his course. He said he had a full view of the Mexican army. Such a number of men he had never before beheld. "It appeared," he said, "that the whole valley was full, and they were still pouring in." He continued around the mountain, and got into a narrow defile. In this way he travelled some four or five miles, when he espied a gap or pass, which he conjectured must lead to the valley. He entered this, and came to where he could see the plain, and the rancho of Buena Vista, and troops scattered over the valley. They had the appearance of Mexicans, so he did not venture towards them, but continued his way along the defile, which brought him out in sight of Saltillo. He now ventured into town, and found, to his joy, that the American troops had possession of the place. He returned to Buena Vista immediately, and reported to Col. Yell, who had entertained great fears for his and his men's safety. The number of men he had with him was twenty. This adventure has never before been mentioned in any report, so we deemed it our duty to record it here.

CHAPTER XV.

The Battle Continued—Loss of America's Bravest Sons—The Troops Suffer for Want of Fire—Despatch a Hasty Breakfast—Retreat of the Enemy—Shocking Sight of the Dead, Dying and Wounded—Seeming Affliction of Women—Hunting up Wounded Mexicans—Troops Engaged in Burying the Dead—The Troops Encamp at Buena Vista—Coffee Procured—Fresh Meat Desired—A Drove of Sheep Devoured.

About 2 o'clock on the morning of the 23d, the piquets were driven in, and the action began at break of day, in the mountains, between their infantry and our riflemen. Major Trail, 2d Illinois Regiment, was ordered to the support of Col. Marshall with his battalion of riflemen. The enemy now opened a fire upon our left from a battery they had planted on the side of the mountain, near where his light infantry commenced to ascend it. The 2d Kentucky Infantry and Bragg's battery of Artillery were ordered from the extreme right, and Sherman's battery was ordered up from the rear, to take post with Col. Bissel's 2d Illinois Regiment, on a plateau which extended from the centre of the line to the foot of the mountains, the sides of which were covered with Mexican infantry, and our riflemen, who were keeping up a pretty brisk fire.

About 8 o'clock, the enemy made an attempt, with a large body of lancers, infantry and artillery, to charge Captain Washington's battery, posted in the pass, but after a few well directed shots, he was compelled to desist. In connec-

tion with this movement, a heavy column of the enemy's cavalry and infantry, and the battery on the side of the mountain, moved against our left, which was held by Brigadier General Lane, with the four companies of Arkansas Cavalry, which were posted at the north base of the mountains, and Captain Price's squadron of Kentucky Cavalry, which was posted somewhat in the rear of the front line, and to the right of the Arkansas Regiment, and the 2d Indiana Regiment, with Lieut. O'Brien's section of Artillery, was posted on the front line. The Arkansas Cavalry and Capt. Price's squadron of Kentucky Cavalry were now joined together, and ordered forward to the left, and somewhat in the rear of the 2d Indiana Regiment, and Lieut. O'Brien's section of Artillery.

The enemy now opened his fire upon us from all quarters, which was promptly returned by the Second Indiana Regiment and O'Brien's battery. The whole of this time the four companies of Arkansas Cavalry, and the two companies of Kentucky Cavalry, were under a most galling fire from the infantry in front, and a cross fire of grape and canister from the battery posted on our left, without having orders to return the compliment. O'Brien returned the fire with his guns, as also did the 2d Indiana Regiment, but by some mistake Col. Bowls gave the unfortunate orders to cease firing and retreat, which they did in great disorder. On running over the ravine, they came across the horses belonging to the Arkansas and Kentucky Riflemen, who were dismounted and in the mountain. Some of these they mounted, and pushed off for quarters more safe. This was what gave rise to the report of the Arkansas Regiment having retreated, as the men appeared like Arkansas men, being mounted on their horses. Any one at a distance would have been led to believe they were such. Some of these men were afterwards

rallied, and fought with their Colonel in the Mississippi Regiment. In consequence of this movement, the enemy was inspired with new courage, and came rushing down the mountains. Colonel Marshall seeing the perilous situation of the riflemen, (which induced him to sound the retreat,) then rode up to Colonel Yell and proposed a charge on the Mexican lines, but before they could do so, the enemy was so near that it was deemed advisable to fall back across the ravine, and then charge them. Lieutenant O'Brien held his position as long as possible, and then fell back, leaving one of his pieces, all the men and horses belonging to it having been killed or wounded. Colonel Bissel's Regiment (2d Illinois), which had been joined by a section of Captain Sherman's battery, was completely out-flanked, and compelled to fall back, being entirely unsupported. About this time, Colonels Yell and Marshall, discovering that the enemy was attempting to cut off the riflemen, who were in imminent danger, gained an advantageous plat of ground, and charged the enemy's lines with great intrepidity and courage. Here for the first time the enemy was driven back.* By this advantage over the enemy, the riflemen were enabled to escape from the impending danger. Some got their horses and joined their regiment, and those who had no horses went on to the rancho.

The enemy was now pouring masses of cavalry and infantry along the foot of the mountain, which made matters look rather serious. At this juncture General Taylor arrived from Saltillo. The Mississippians were ordered to the left before reaching their position, and immediately came into action with the Mexican infantry, who were in the act of turning our left flank. The 2d Kentucky Regiment, and

* See Lieutenant Colonel Roane's Report in the Appendix.

a section of artillery under Captain Bragg, had been ordered from the right to reinforce our left. That regiment, and a portion of the 1*st Illinois Regiment*, under Colonel Hardin, gallantly drove the enemy back, and regained a portion of the ground we had lost. Captains Sherman's and Bragg's batteries were planted on the plateau, and did awful execution, both in front and among those who had gained our rear. The enemy was now pressing very heavily on the Mississippi Regiment, and the 3d Indiana Regiment, under Colonel Lane, was despatched to strengthen that part of our line. At the same time, Lieutenant Killburn, with a piece of Captain Bragg's battery, was also ordered to support the infantry there engaged. The action was for a time warmly contested at that point. The enemy made great efforts with his cavalry and infantry, but was repulsed with heavy loss.

The enemy still continued pushing his infantry and cavalry along the base of the mountain. The *Arkansas** and Kentucky Cavalry, to which some of the riflemen who were fortunate enough to get their horses had now joined themselves, had several skirmishes with the enemy's cavalry, but were compelled to fall back, being entirely unsupported, while the cavalry of the enemy was supported by hosts of infantry on the side of the mountain.

Lieutenant Colonel May, with the regular cavalry, and Captain Pike's squadron of *Arkansas* Volunteer Cavalry, was ordered to their support, but on coming up to where the enemy could have been driven back, his command was ordered to another part of the field. This left the *Arkansas* and Kentucky Cavalry in a very unpleasant predicament. In the meantime a detachment of Captain Bragg's, and a part of Captain Sherman's batteries, were making sad havoc

* The different corps printed in italics are those which were previously with the Central Division.

among the enemy at another point on our left, and the determined resistance they had met from the Mississippi and 3d Indiana Regiments had caused confusion in their ranks in that quarter, and some of them attempted to retreat upon their main line. Lieutenant Rucker, with a squadron of the 1*st Dragoons*, was ordered up a deep ravine, which they were attempting to retreat across, to charge and disperse them. This squadron proceeded to the point from which they intended to charge, but it was impossible to effect this, being exposed to the fire of a battery, which was established to cover their retreat. While this squadron was detailed on this duty, the wagon train became extended out on the Saltillo road, and thus became a conspicuous mark for that portion of the enemy which had gained our rear. Their movements showed that they meditated a charge on upon it, in which case they would necessarily have to pass by the rancho of Buena Vista. Colonels Yell and Marshall discovered this manœuvre, as also did the commanding General. The *Arkansas* and Kentucky Cavalry now fell back to obtain a safe position to receive their charge. In the meanwhile, the disorganized troops which had collected at the rancho were organized by Major Monroe, Chief of Artillery, assisted by Major Morrison, of the Commissary Department, and were stationed to defend that position. Lieut. Col. May had also been ordered with his squadron and two pieces of Captain Sherman's battery, under Lieutenant Reynolds, to assist in defending the station, but before he arrived the enemy had been gallantly met by the *Arkansas* and Kentucky Cavalry, when a most bloody fight ensued, so terrible that in the short space of a minute and a half (the time the fight lasted) upwards of twenty were killed and wounded on the side of the Americans, and about thirty-five on the side of the enemy.

They were, however, forced to yield, and divided into two

bodies, one sweeping by the rancho, whence they received a deadly fire from the troops collected there. At this time Col. May arrived and charged through the rancho, but the enemy had left; they however received a few parting blessings from Lieutenant Reynolds's section as they ascended the mountain on our right. The remaining portion regained the base of the mountain on our left.

In this charge fell Col. Yell, while gallantly fighting at the head of his regiment. It is said that it was owing to his bridle bitts breaking and his horse becoming ungovernable that he fell a victim to the Mexican lancers. Here fell, also, Capt. Porter of Company D, Arkansas Volunteers, and Adjutant Vaughan of the Kentucky Cavalry.

Lieut. Col. May, who had been rejoined by the squadron of First Dragoons, the Arkansas Cavalry under Lieut. Col. Roane and by a portion of the Indiana troops under Major Gorman, now approached the base of the mountain, holding in check the right flank of the enemy, upon whom our artillery was doing fearful execution.

The situation of that part of the enemy now became very critical, so much so that it seemed doubtful whether they could regain their main body. Gen. Santa Anna, seeing the perilous situation of this division of his army, by the invention of a piece of Mexican strategy thought to avert its discomfiture. He sent a white flag to Gen. Taylor, desiring to know what he wanted, when Gen. Wool was forthwith deputed to reply. He proceeded to the Mexican battery at the base of the mountain to see the General-in-Chief, but in consequence of a refusal to cease firing upon our troops, he returned without seeing Gen. Santa Anna, or communicating the answer of Gen. Taylor, which was, that he wanted Santa Anna and all his army.

Santa Anna had accomplished what he wished, for had it

not been for this piece of cunning craftiness, our troops could have prevented his cavalry from joining his main body, but in consequence of the cessation of firing on the part of our troops, they were enabled to gain their main line, not however until they had received a farewell from Major McCullough's company of Texas Rangers, who had previously been attached to Col. May's command, but here, seeing that the enemy was about to get away, left and proceeded up the ravine and charged them on their own hook, but it had very little effect.

The enemy had now concentrated his force for the purpose of making a bold move against our centre. Lieutenant O'Brien was ordered to advance and check this movement, which he did in a most gallant manner, and maintained his position until his support was completely routed and his men and horses almost all killed or wounded. He was then compelled to abandon his remaining two pieces and they fell into the hands of the enemy. From this point the enemy marched to the centre, bringing up his six thousand reserve, now intending to make a last and desperate effort.

They were met by the *First* and *Second Regiments Illinoisians*, under Cols. Hardin and Bissel, and the Second Kentuckians, under Col. McKee. These were all under the immediate eye of old Zack himself. He once remarked to Gen. Wool, that his men tore down ranchos, but now the *First Illinois Regiment* was seen getting behind the ravine, and expressed himself that he was afraid they would not fight. Gen. Wool's reply was, "Hold on, General, and if you do not see another rancho torn down, why I'm not here." True enough, as the enemy arose on the other side of the ravine, the *Illinoisians* let loose, and it was one continual sheet of fire pouring from their muskets, and, as Gen. Wool

said, they did tear down another rancho, and great was the fall thereof.

This was the hottest and most critical part of the action, and our gallant Suckers and Kentuckians stood up before a vastly superior force for some time, but were about giving way when the batteries of Captains Sherman and Bragg came up most opportunely from the rear, under the immediate direction of Gen. Taylor, and by a well directed fire checked and drove back the enemy with great loss. It was at this time that Gen. Taylor made use of the words which have been going the rounds in the United States, namely, "Give them a little more grape, Capt. Bragg."

A large body of the enemy's lancers now took our infantry in flank and drove them down the ravine in front of *Capt. Washington's Battery*, where Lieutenants Brent and Whitting gave them such a torrent of grape as soon put them to flight, and thus saved the remnants of those brave regiments who had stood the hottest of the fight. This was the last effort made by Santa Anna, but the firing continued between the enemy's artillery and ours until dark, when, as if by mutual consent, both parties ceased.

In this last charge, America lost some of her bravest and best sons; they have sunk to their long and undisturbed repose, no more to urge on the battle with their cheering voices. Col. Hardin was an extraordinarily gallant and accomplished officer; while in camp he was the soldier's best friend, and on duty he assumed a commanding appearance that would have done honor to a Napoleon, Wellington, or a Jackson. His only fault in battle was, he was too forward and too conspicuous a mark for the enemy. When we look at the price at which the battle was obtained, and how many were killed who have left distressed widows and helpless orphans, or afflicted and bereaved parents to mourn over an irre-

parable loss, it can scarcely be called a victory. Such men as Yell, Hardin, McKee and Clay are but seldom found at the present day.

That night the troops bivouacked without fires and suffered not a little from the cold. Gen. Wool had the wagons arranged at the hacienda, and the wagoners armed, so that if a demonstration should be made in that quarter from the Mexican Cavalry who had menaced our rear during the day, they would be in a fair way to receive them. Their cavalry, under command of Gen. Minon, had ascended the elevated plain above Saltillo, and occupied the road leading from the battle field to the city, where they took several of our men, and likewise a wagon loaded with wounded, whom they killed. Capt. Shover, with a piece of artillery, supported by a command of miscellaneous mounted volunteers, fired several well directed shots among them, which drove them into the ravines. Capt. Shover being reinforced by a piece of Capt. Webster's battery, from the redoubt, and Capt. Wheeler's company of *Second Illinois Volunteers*, pursued them closely. The enemy made one or two attempts to charge the artillery, but was finally driven off, and did not again appear on the plain.

On the morning of the 24th, the troops were up before day in order to prepare and despatch a hasty breakfast of raw bacon and crackers, expecting a renewal of the fight at daybreak. Many thought we would whip them easily this day, for the Mexicans, when they fought hard one day, would not do so the next, and the battle of Resaca de la Palma was referred to as a sample.

But just about day-break some of the troops posted on the plateau, discovered that the enemy had retreated, and the whole command sounded it throughout the camp. We mounted our horse and ascended to the plateau, and there

saw his last column as it moved off. Great was the joy manifested when the word was first communicated to Gen. Taylor; he was standing beside a fire with some soldiers. When he heard it, he began rubbing his hands, which he continued to do for some seconds, and then said, "Boys, give us three cheers." Never were three more cordial cheers given than at this time.

The *Arkansas Cavalry*, under Lieut. Col. Roane, and the Kentucky Cavalry, under Col. Marshal, were mounted and started in pursuit. On going out, the most shocking sight met our eyes that we ever before witnessed. The ground was literally covered with men wounded, dead and dying, and the heart-rending and piteous moans sent up by those still alive, were sufficient to cause the stoutest hearts to shudder and the most blunted feelings to sympathise. We also noticed some women and children. Whether they were present at the time of the sanguinary conflict, we know not, but there they were now. We have no doubt they remained behind until their army retreated, and, not finding their husbands and friends with the main body, had come to seek them among the dead.

We proceeded on towards Agua Nueva, taking a great many prisoners, but on coming within about four miles of that place we came upon their piquets and run them in. It was then discovered that the enemy had encamped at Agua Nueva; so we halted, and, after collecting together the troops who had become scattered in hunting up wounded Mexicans in the chaparal that grew there, returned to the battle ground, where we heard platoons firing occasionally. It was our troops, who, notwithstanding they were worn out and exhausted, could not think of letting the remains of their fallen comrades lie unburied, a prey to wolves and vultures, and their bones to bleach under the burning sun of a tropical

clime. Ever mindful of honorable actions, they were attending the solemn rites with the honors of war, and never were those honors more deserved than in the present instance.

The troops were now ordered to encamp at rancho Buena Vista. Capt. Pike's squadron *Arkansas Cavalry* and Lieut. Rucker's squadron of dragoons were sent out within sight of the enemy, to act as a piquet. It was here that Lieut. Rucker wanted to charge the whole Mexican army in their camp at Agua Nueva. On approaching within sight, say about four miles distance, the Mexican army, perceiving these two squadrons, formed a line of battle. Seeing this, the Lieutenant requested Capt. Pike, who was in command, to charge, but that officer refused, and good reason he had for declining the honor. However the Lieutenant declared he would, but refrained, because Capt. Pike, who was in command, thought it would be a piece of fool-hardiness.

In the meanwhile, the troops had taken up their camp at Buena Vista. Some went to work to procure for themselves a cup of coffee, a beverage they had not tasted during the previous forty-eight hours. Many were wishing for fresh meat, being tired of eating raw bacon, when suddenly, as if providentially sent, like quails to the Isrealites, a drove of sheep came running into camp. It is needless to say that without ceremony the sheep were despatched, and not one remained or escaped.

CHAPTER XVI.

Report of the Number of Killed, Wounded and Missing—Causes of Different Reports—Troops remain at Buena Vista—Mexicans Leaving their Wounded to our Hospitality—An Election Held—Mexican Wounded in a Starving Condition—A Sickening Sight—American Deserters—Five Day's Rations left for the Wounded Mexicans—Gen. Taylor goes in Pursuit of Gen. Urrea—Encantada an Outpost—Gambling the Order of the Day Again—Ingenuity of the Indian while Engaged in Capturing Mules—Capture of Chihuahua—A Forgotten Thing brought Forward—Gen. Taylor Countermands—Camp Talk—Camanche Indians—Havoc among the Ranchos—Camanches take the Suckers' Caps—The Caravan Stopped and the Indians Victorious—Pretty Spectacle—Shy Looking Fellows—Recruiting Commenced and a New Company Formed—Visited by two Mexican Officers—*Carrajo*—Purport of the Mexican Officer's Despatches—Gen. Taylor's Reply.

The troops remained at Buena Vista until the 27th, during which time the boys of the Central Division (alas!) had an opportunity to talk about a real and genuine *stampede*, one indeed for which they had wished. They were now perfectly satisfied. We must here observe that our Indian did honor to his race.

The following is a correct account, taken the day after the battle, of the killed, wounded and missing, amounting to 760. Different reports have been made out at later periods, which make the number still greater, but the cause of such an augmention is, that a vast number died of their wounds shortly after the battle. Our report may be relied on as accurate:

Major Generals,	killed,	0	wounded,	0
Brigadier Generals,	"	0	"	1
General Staff,	"	1	"	2
Third Artillery,	"	1	"	22
Fourth Artillery,	"	5	"	21
First Dragoons,	"	0	"	7
Second Dragoons,	"	0	"	2
Kentucky Cavalry,	"	27	"	34
Arkansas Cavalry,	"	23	"	40
Mississippi Riflemen,	"	40	"	56
First Illinois Infantry,	"	29	"	18
Second Illinois Infantry,	"	48	"	75
Second Kentucky Infantry,	"	44	"	57
Second Indiana Infantry,	"	32	"	71
Third Indiana Infantry,	"	9	"	56
Texas Infantry,	"	14	"	2
Total,		273		464

Missing.—Third Artillery, 2; *Arkansas Cavalry*, 4; Mississippi Riflemen, 2; *Second Illinois Infantry*, 3; Second Kentucky Infantry, 1; Second Indiana Infantry, 4; Texas Infantry, 7. Total, 23.

On the morning of the 27th, we struck our tents and started for Agua Nueva. We arrived there about 12 o'clock, and found that the Mexicans had evacuated the place, leaving a number of wounded to our hospitality. These were conveyed, together with the other wounded, to Saltillo.

On the 28th, an election was held in the Arkansas and 1st Illinois Regiments, for the election of Colonels. In the first, Lieut. Col. Roane was elected Colonel, *vice* Col. Yell, deceased, and Adjutant Mears Lieutenant Colonel, *vice* Lieut. Col. Roane, promoted. In the latter, Lieut. Col. Weatherford was elected Colonel, *vice* Col. Hardin, deceased, and

Major Warren Lieutenant Colonel, *vice* Lieut. Col. Weatherford, promoted.

On the 1st of March, Lieut. Col. Mears, with part of the Arkansas Regiment, was ordered to proceed to Encarnacion, in company with detachments from other corps, and a train of wagons, loaded partly with provisions, because, from latest accounts from that place, we heard that the Mexican army had left a vast number of wounded there, who were in a starving condition. After proceeding about ten miles, we began to find dead men, and from that on to Encarnacion the road was strewed with them. On reaching that place, the sight became sickening. The dead, dying and wounded were all crowded together. Every house, church and other place was filled. O! what a lesson to ambitious man. Was he ever created for the purpose of enhancing misery, and for populating hospitals like these? The career of the most ambitious may end here, and the most ardent thirst for glory terminate in a manner similar to those objects of pity in the hospitals of Encarnacion. The wagons were unloaded, and bread and bacon given to the hungry, or those who were yet able to call for and masticate it. We never saw a hungry lion or tiger, in a menagerie, tear assunder and devour food in a more voracious manner than these half starved wretches. Some declared they had not eaten anything for five days.

Here we saw some deserters from the American army. There they sat, looking worse than condemned criminals under the gibbet. They were now aware of the reality of their situation, and wanted to return to the American camp, but their supplications were in vain. General Taylor would have nothing to do with them. He told one of them, who was taken on the morning of February 24th, that he was not worth the powder it would take to shoot him. They were, however, resolved on coming, and when the troops left, they

followed. When we last saw them, they were with the provost guard, wearing a sort of yoke around their necks, which must have made it very difficult for them to lie down, besides having something like a twenty-four pound shot attached to their legs.

Some of the wounded were sent to Saltillo, but a great number yet remained. Provisions for five days were left for their benefit, but in our opinion it would not be sufficient for more than one.

We arrived in camp on the evening of the 2d March, and remained at Agua Nueva until the 6th, without any special occurrence. This day General Taylor departed in pursuit of General Urrea, taking with him several of his favorite corps, but none of the Central Division. On the 8th we all marched for Buena Vista. It now seemed as though we were destined to lie in camp a long time, which we actually did. The troops had an opportunity of resting, and really they needed it.

Eight companies of the Arkansas Regiment were posted at Encantada, for the purpose of forming an outpost, and guarding the different passes in the neighborhood. The remaining two companies, Captain Pike's squadron, were stationed at Saltillo.

We will not attempt to impart a daily report of matters and things in camp; but everything of interest, and all diverting occurrences, shall be noticed, until our march for Camargo.

Gambling was the leading amusement of the day. The Arkansas men constructed a very good race course, on which races came off every day or two. We saw some very fleet horses running, and we likewise saw some distinguished officers acting as judges on these occasions. In fact the Encantada race course was known throughout the whole army.

Our Indian was now engaged in capturing horses and mules, which had strayed over the plain, with his *lariat* or *lasso*. This weapon he had learned to use with great dexterity. He realized a pretty handsome profit by this business, for he sold the captured animals to men who were on foot, and who did not wish to go to much expense.

Sometimes the owners would come and claim their property, prove it, and take it away. They proved the horses as their property by a brand on the hip. They brought their branding iron with them, and if it fitted the mark on the horse in question, of course he was given up. In such cases our Indian would be convicted, and his sentence was often the penalty of lying ten or fifteen days at the guard-house. However, he matched them after all, for he procured a piece of iron and altered the mark, so that he baffled the efforts of the owners to recognize their property.

Time went on now without any striking occurrences, until the first of April, when we heard of the battle of Sacramento and the capture of Chihuahua, by Col. Doniphan. This was the battle that had been intended for the Central Division. Had we never been so fortunate as to have got into a battle, we might have complained that we did not get the opportunity of taking Chihuahua. But we had been in a *small skirmish* on the 23d of February, which the boys of the "Sleepy Column" had not yet forgotten. They were perfectly satisfied. Capt. Pike, of the Arkansas Cavalry, was ordered to proceed forthwith to Chihuahua, as bearer of despatches to Col. Doniphan, which he did with an escort of about twenty men.

Something was brought forward about this time which every body thought was forgotten, and that was the affair which came off on the 10th of February, viz: the killing of the murderous rancheros, for the brutal murder they had

committed. The companies concerned were ordered to take up their march for the Rio Grande. This was sudden, but the men did not take it hard. They thought it would only be getting that much nearer home. The time specified for them to start was the 7th of April. On the night of the 6th all hands in the Arkansas Regiment took a general parting spree, and such a time Encantada had hitherto been a stranger to. In the morning they started off, amid the cheers of the remainder of the regiment. They, however, did not go farther than Monterey. Lieut. Col. Mears accompanied them that distance, and by a letter from Gen. Wool, and his own influence, Gen. Taylor was induced to countermand his previous orders, and these two companies returned to Encantada, much against the will of some, but not of all, for there were some in these companies who were innocent, and had evinced a noble spirit by a willingness to share the *disgrace* (if our readers will term it by that cognomen,) with their companions.

The time was now approaching for the discharge of the twelve months volunteers, which formed camp talk for the soldiers. Nothing occurred worthy of note, until about the 1st of May, when the Camanche Indians made a descent on the country which had been considered as conquered by the Americans, and made great havoc among the Mexican ranchos, killing men, women and children, and stealing their horses, cattle and everything they could get their hands on. It now became necessary to send out detachments to prevent these depredations from being committed. We had conquered the country, and of course it was our duty to protect it. Companies were accordingly sent out in every direction, but to no purpose. The Indians were no where to be found, but still continued their depredations to such an extent that it was dangerous for Mexicans to travel.

Some three or four of the Illinois Volunteers happened

to be out procuring some wood, and while busily engaged, the Indians came upon them, scaring them not a little, for they had the appearance of Mexican lancers, being armed with that weapon. They came charging on them before the "Suckers" had time to form a hollow square to repel them. One of the Indians spoke a little English, and exclaimed, "Americanos, how do do?" The Indians then asked to see their caps, which request was granted, and after looking at them for some time, they put them on, when the whole party raised a loud laugh and galloped off, biding "good bye," and leaving our heroes minus their caps.

A party was sent out about this time on the Zacatecas road for the purpose of intercepting some stores which were reported to be on the way to the Mexican forces stationed at San Luis Potosi. After riding all night, they overhauled the caravan and stopped it. The men were fatigued and hungry, and after leaving a guard with the captured property, they concluded to go to a neighboring rancho, and obtain something to eat. But lo, and behold! while they were gone the Indians came upon the caravan, charging the guard, when the Mexicans and all *vamosed*, leaving the Indians victorious.

When the party who had gone to the rancho returned, they found a pretty spectacle; everything had been overhauled. Some of them, going in a hurry, had left their forage sacks with some corn in them, which was emptied out, but nothing was taken except a couple of the Mexican mules. The Indians must have conceived the idea that the stores belonged to the Americans, or they would undoubtedly have carried something away. The guard, so called, who ran *sans ceremonie*, leaving stores and all to the triumph of the Indians, came into camp one by one, and such a shy looking set of fellows we never before saw. Their only excuse was

that they thought they were Mexican lancers. The number of Indians that raised this enormous *stampede*, we subsequently learned, was somewhere about forty. They still continued their depredations on the Mexicans. In fact the Camanche Indians are the most inveterate enemies of the Mexican peasantry.

About this time Lieut. Col. Mears commenced to recruit a company of cavalry to serve during the war. This was an undertaking that was looked upon as useless, in consequence of the suffering and privation the troops had endured during the past year. One would have supposed it impossible to have enlisted one man, but such was not the case. Col. Mears was generally beloved by the whole regiment, and got many signatures to his roll. The prospects of a speedy peace were quite promising, news having been received of the siege of Vera Cruz and the battle of Cerro Gordo. Numbers judged that the war was almost over, and the idea of receiving 160 acres more of land, making, in addition to their previous services, 320 acres, induced many to join. The roll was finally filled, and an election was held for officers. Col. Mears was unanimously elected Captain, not having any opponent; Adjutant Ross was elected First Lieutenant; Second Lieutenant McAfee, of company G, was elected Second Lieutenant, and private D. P. W. Morrison, of company B, was elected Junior Second Lieutenant: all the officers being elected from the Arkansas Regiment.* They were indeed a good looking company, and we sincerely believe, should they ever get a chance, they will again do honor to the different regiments to which they formerly belonged.

About this time, the 17th of May, we had a visit paid us by two Mexican officers. They came to one of our

* We forgot to mention that a number of both regiments of the Illinois Volunteers joined the company.

piquets and requested to be conducted in. They were accordingly taken to the Arkansas camp first, and I have no doubt they thought they were a used up community, for the Rackensacks made a perfect charge to get a good look at them. Not having had much time for an examination at the charge on the rancho on the 23d of February, they were anxious to know how they looked on closer inspection. We noticed one fellow examining every thing minutely, at the conclusion of which he scared the Mexican almost out of his saddle by looking at him, grinning like an ourang outang, and saluting him with that emphatic Spanish word, which every volunteer has learned, "*carrajo!*" After saying this he walked off, leaving the terrified lancer to make the best he could of it.

The Mexican deputation was sent to Gen. Wool, and he detained them in Saltillo, sending their despatches to Gen. Taylor. The purport of these was, the commander at San Luis Potosi wished to know whether Gen. Taylor was resolved to wage a war similar to that of the Camanches, or a war like civilized nations. What induced him to send such a request we know not, for no depredations had been committed on the Mexicans lately, save by the Camanche Indians themselves. Perhaps the Americans were accused at San Luis with it. Gen. Taylor's answer was, that he would reply to him before the walls of San Luis, and so sent the bearer of despatches back, or at least had them escorted through the American lines, from whence they might go where they pleased.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Time for Going Home—Great Sufferings of Col. Doniphan's Troops—Illinoisians start for New Orleans—Gen. Wool's Parting Address—Reflections—Forbearance of Gen. Wool—His Courage and Valor—Remarks—Anecdote of the Young Officer and his Dulcinea—Central Division about Breaking Up in Earnest—The Parting Hand to Gen. Wool—Army of Chihuahua—Regiment Proceeds Twelve Miles—Our Indian Again—Encamped at Reconada—Gen. Ampudia's Fortification—Reach Monterey—The Black Fort and Bishop's Palace—Capt. Pike's Squadron Discharged—Joyful News—The Bodies of Col. Yell, Capt. Porter and Private Pelham—Set out and Arrive at Ceralvo—Saw Massachusetts Volunteers—Encamped at Canales' Run—The Town of Meir—Reached Camargo on the Fifteenth—Gen. Pillow's Fortress—Illinois Regiments Mustered Out of Service—Arkansas Regiment Discharged—Stanzas—Addresses Given by Cols. Weatherford, Bissel and Roane—Paymasters Finish their Work—Our Indian Remains There—Encamped at the Depot of Rio Grande—Mexican Rope Dancers—Upper Reynoso—Reach the Mouth of the River—Arrive at the Mouth of the Mississippi—Arrive at the Crescent City—Reflections—New Orleans Dandies—Appeal to the Reader—The Author's Remarks Respecting Himself—Appeal to the Public.

The Arkansas and the two Illinois regiments now learned the time designated for them to leave for home. The Illinois regiments were to start on the 30th of May, and the Arkansas regiment on the 5th of June. The place at which we were to be discharged was New Orleans. This did very well for the Illinoisians, but a great many of the Arkansas men wished to return by land through Texas, which caused some little dissatisfaction; but we think that a man who with-

stood the hardships peculiar to our campaign, and faced death in all its ghastly forms, might be glad to escape out of Mexico the best way he could.

Capt. Pike and escort had arrived in good health. Col. Doniphan's troops had also arrived and underwent an inspection from Gen. Wool and then started for New Orleans, there to be discharged, their term of service having expired. These men looked as though they had not only seen the elephant but the kangaroo, also. Their sufferings must have been very great, and we are of the opinion that shoes were in demand in the regiment, but no merchants to supply them.

At length the 30th arrived, and the Illinoisians, with light hearts, set out for New Orleans. Gen. Wool accompanied them as far as Saltillo, where he delivered to them a parting address. We learned from a gentleman who was present that it was a most affecting scene. It seemed difficult for the good old General to part with the troops who had shared the troubles and toils of the march from San Antonio to Saltillo with him, and, last of all, but not least, had stood by him in time of need.

Here we see a man whose name, four months prior, had not been mentioned but with scorn, now hailed with benedictions, lauded and beloved by every man of the Central Division yet on the stage of action, and wo to the man who would have dared to speak disrespectfully of Gen. Wool in the "Sleepy Column." It was now seen that the man who only slept six hours out of twenty-four, and used so much discretion and discipline, was the man in time of danger. It is said that some time during the march, one of his officers told him that the troops were cursing him. "Oh!" said he, "never mind; let them alone, they will find something else to do before their time expires."

At the battle of Buena Vista, Gen. Wool's conduct was

such as to win the approbation of every man in the army. We saw him ourself, riding alone, where balls were flying almost as dense as rain drops from the clouds, or as hail in a storm, and at all times during the day, he was constantly a shining mark for Mexican bullets. As for qualifications, our army has few better Generals. Gen. Taylor, in his official despatches, mentions his name in the highest terms of applause. But we are not writing biographies, and will conclude the remark concerning Gen. Wool, by saying that other regular officers of the army have, during the past year, risen from the rank of Brevet Brigadier General to that of Major General, and Gen. Wool, we know, has distinguished himself aa much as they. How is it that he remains without a promotion? Perhaps some of the worthies at Washington can inform us.

We have been told a very ludicrous and laughable story concerning one of the young officers attached to the 1st Illinois Regiment. It would seem that the young spark was irresistably smitten with the charms of one of the *senoritas* of Saltillo, whose black and lustrous hair, shining like the raven's plumage, hung in apparent neglect around her handsome brow, and over her graceful neck, in beautiful ringlets, and whose sylph-like form and gazelle-like agility was too much for our hero to resist, although he could withstand the copper balls of the Mexicans, and the *lasso* of the murderous rancheros. Therefore, when the time arrived for his departure, he thought he could not help paying a visit to his fair dulcinea. After going to a Mexican barber shop, and having himself done up within an inch of his life, the little golden stripes on his shoulders, termed epaulettes, which were soon to slumber, like Gen. Taylor's, in an old trunk, were now brushed up for the last time. After viewing himself all over, to see that all was right, he set out on his amorous excursion to

the *casa* (house) which contained the object of his adoration, to worship at the shrine of the fair goddess, and to sip the dulcified nectar from those enchanting lips, ere he should forever leave her and the land of red peppers and *pelonsellas*.

On coming to the house, he thought over all the Spanish he had ever learned, and knocked at the door. It was opened by a rough looking *pion*, and he was conducted to the room of the fair one. The meeting was an affecting one, as might be anticipated. After conducting her to the sofa, he commenced to tell her (in Spanish, of course,) in the best manner possible, that he was going to leave her, perhaps forever, when she, without listening to his sentimental tale of love, put her delicate little hand to her forehead, and took something therefrom, and holding it between her fingers, she said: "*Como si llama este en Americano?*" [What is the name of this in American.] He looked at it, and exclaimed, "A louse, by G—d!" The poor love-smitten officer *vamosed* without entering on the duties commonly performed by parting lovers. He took up his line of march for Camargo with a lighter heart than he had expected.

The Central Division was now about to break up in earnest. The only troops remaining of that Division were the Arkansas Cavalry, a squadron of the 1st Dragoons, Captain Washington's Artillery, Captain Mears' company of mounted volunteers, formed out of the Arkansas and two Illinois Regiments, and the company of Texas Foot Volunteers.

On the 3d, Captain Pike's squadron, Arkansas Cavalry, left for home, and on the morning of the 5th the remainder of the regiment did likewise.

Gen. Wool being somewhat indisposed, was not able to come out to address the whole regiment. The officers, therefore, went to his tent, where they took the parting hand with the old General. He conversed with them for some time,

during which he said no cavalry regiment in the service had performed more duty than the Arkansas Regiment. This was the last regiment of the Central Division which remained in the field, and it was about to leave too. Thus the great army of Chihuahua became extinct.

On the 5th of June, the Arkansas Regiment proceeded twelve miles from Saltillo, and encamped by the side of a small stream. Our Indian had provided all the boys on foot with horses, by which he had realized a "fine pile." The last trick we heard of his having done, was on the day we left Encantada. He went to a neighboring rancho and drove off an old mule, which was not worth three picayunes. The owner followed, entreating him to give him his mule back again. After constraining the Mexican to walk about ten miles, he gave him his mule.

On the morning of the 6th we set out, and encamped that night at Reconada Pass. We saw this day the place which Gen. Ampudia had fortified subsequent to the great battle of Monterey, being apprehensive that Gen. Taylor might come after him. Had Gen. Taylor met him there, he would have had a harder fight than he had at Monterey, for undoubtedly it is the most formidable place we have seen in Mexico. The only way of approaching it is by ascending a hill, by a road about wide enough for four men to ride abreast. At the head of this, Ampudia had a redoubt thrown up, so that he could have raked the whole road.

On the next day, the 7th, we reached Monterey, and proceeded to the Walnut Spring, and encamped near General Taylor's camp. At Monterey we visited the Black Fort, which, with the improvements made by order of Gen. Taylor, would stand a long siege. We counted thirty-four pieces of ordnance, all of which, with the exception of two howitzers, had been taken from the Mexicans. We also visited

the Bishop's Palace, which resembles the ruins of some old castle more than a palace occupied by a prelate of the nineteenth century. In fact it reminded us of the Alamo, at San Antonio. We visited several other places in the city, where conflicts had taken place during the siege.

We here learned that Capt. Pike's squadron had been discharged, by their own request, and also that the remainder of the Arkansas and the two Illinois Regiments would be discharged at Camargo. This was joyful news to us, for our time of being discharged was nigh at hand, and it was likewise good news to those who wished to go home by land, because they would now have an opportunity.

We should have previously mentioned that the bodies of Col. Yell, Capt. Porter, and private John Pelham, of company B, Arkansas Regiment, had been disinterred, under the superintendence of 1st Lieutenant N. T. Gaines, commanding company B, and were now on their way to the United States to find a resting place in their native land.

We remained at the Walnut Springs until the mroning of the 10th, when we set out for Camargo. The first evening, we encamped at Agua Frio, which means cold water, but it was about as warm as any we had previously drank.

On the evening of the 12th we arrived at Ceralvo, where we found a portion of the Massachusetts Volunteers encamped. They were complaining very much, and wished for peace, their regiment being in for the war. Seeing so many of the twelve months volunteers on the road home, it no doubt worked on their feelings. We heard some of them asking one of our men how long he thought they would have to stay. "O," said he, "assuming a face as long as if he were saying grace before a thanksgiving dinner, "I think it is probable you will get out of it in about five years," and then started off, whistling "Home, sweet home."

The next day we encamped at what is called Canales' Run, from the fact of its having been the depot of that brigand general. Our march the day after was to the town of Meir. This town is noted for being the place where some Texians were captured in 1839, among whom was Capt. Henrie. He was taken with Majors Gaines' and Boreland's party at Encarnacion, but subsequently made his escape.

The following morning we were off, it being twenty-five miles to Camargo, at which place we arrived about 3 o'clock, P. M., on the 15th. We thought we should never meet any of the corps of the Central Division again, but were mistaken, for we here found both of the Illinois regiments encamped, not having yet been discharged. Thus, the majority of the "Sleepy Column" were together once more, and soon the Rackensacks and Suckers were seen arm in arm, strolling over the town and enjoying themselves comparatively well.

We here had an opportunity of seeing the celebrated, far-famed and much-talked-of works with the ditches on both sides, constructed by Gen. Pillow. We think the General's ideas were good, that is, if he intended to make the men stand between the inner ditch and the breast work to fight, because it would keep them from retreating, for once between the breast work and the ditch, it would be impossible to fall back, and thus it would save any corps from disgrace.

On the 16th, the 1st Illinois regiment was mustered out of service, and the men paid off during this day and part of the next. On the following day, the 17th, the 2d Illinois Regiment was mustered out of service, and some of the 1st regiment started off on a steamboat for the mouth of the river. On the 20th the Arkansas regiment was discharged. Now, as all the troops were discharged, in passing through the

streets of Camargo you might hear the following lines, chaunted by some of the Volunteers:

"No more I'll pant for glory's wreath,
Or long and feathered plumes to strut,
Sleep rusty sabre in your sheath—
E'gad I've seen the elephant!"

The Colonels, on the discharge of the regiments, delivered some very appropriate addresses to the men they lately had the honor of commanding. Cols. Weatherford and Bissel delivered theirs publicly, so that we were unable to obtain them. They were, however, touching and enthusiastic, and every way calculated to do credit to their heads and hearts. Col. Roane's was issued in the shape of an order. Thus we obtained it, and it reads as follows:

HEADQUARTERS ARKANSAS REGIMENT,
Camp near Camargo, Mexico, *June* 18, 1847.

General Order.—The Colonel Commanding would desire in this, his last General Order to the Regiment with which he has so long been associated, and which he has for some time had the honor to command, to tender his deepest gratitude and kindest regards.

During the last year we have been associated in arms, co-laborers for the honor of our beloved country, and participators in the hardships, privations and dangers incident to a soldier's life; and now, when the term of our service is about expiring, it is my greatest pride, as it is my pleasure, to publish to you, and proclaim to the whole world, my entire satisfaction with the manner in which you have discharged your duties.

However arduous and dangerous the service may have been, required of you, I am proud to say, I have ever found a prompt and efficient support from my officers, and a willing and ready obedience yielded by the men. Conduct like this on your part could not fail to create an impression on my mind indelible, and as kind as lasting. I yield to an irresistible impulse, when I announce to you that your conduct at Buena Vista was alike creditable to yourselves individually, to your State and your country. In the language of Briga-

dier General Wool, I may say to you: "You have nobly answered every end for which you were called into the service; your conduct in the great battle of Buena Vista is worthy of commendation; you have rendered a service to your country, of which you have abundant reason to be proud. There was glory enough won upon the bloody field of Buena Vista for all who did their duty there." This is true; and I may add, that none will detract from the living —much less the dead—who are not cravens, and who did not basely falter, and cowardly skulk from danger themselves. The poisoned shafts of defamation from this polluted source have been attempted to be fastened on the escutcheon of this Regiment, but have fallen far short of the mark; and he who vilely hurled them is destined to wear the mantle of shame, and be the scoff of all honest and honorable men.

I deem it my duty to call attention to the gallant officers who have thus rendered such valuable service to their country, either as commanders of companies or as subalterns. I would here premise that three officers were unfortunately prevented from participating in the dangers of the battle by severe indisposition—Capt. English, Capt. Taylor, and Lieut. Douglass had long been confined to their beds by severe and dangerous sickness. The afflictions of Providence should be borne with patience, although at this particular time it was peculiarly distressing.

The commanders of companies worthy of notice are: Captains Patrick, Dillord, Hunter, and Preston; Lieutenants Trousdall, Reader, Gaines; and Desha, after the fall of Capt. Porter, whose conduct whilst living caused his death to be most especially lamented.

The subalterns whose conduct is alike worthy of commendation are: Adjutant Means; Lieutenants McKean, Foster, Tomberlin, Hill, McLean, Scott, Jesse Searcy, Stuart, Sagely, Fagan, Calvert, Giles, Richard Searcy, Carr, Degraftenreid, Cochrane, Willhoff, McAfie, McCown, and Sergeant Major B. F. Ross.

Then you have all to rejoice at the prospect of soon meeting kind friends at home, with the proud satisfaction of knowing that you have done your duty to your country, both in the camp and on the battle field—with nothing to regret, save that you are forced to leave behind you some of your brave companions in arms, and

amongst that number is our beloved and gallant Colonel. To those who knew him, eulogy is superfluous—we should have a tear for his fall, and love for his memory.

JOHN SELDEN ROANE,
Col. Ark. Reg't Cav.

On the 22d, the paymasters had completed paying off the troops, and, at 3 o'clock the same day, all set out with a train of wagons for Reynosa, about forty miles distant, where we expected to find steamboats, the river being too low for boats to ascend to Camargo, having fallen a great deal the three previous days.

The last we saw of our Indian was when he was preparing to return to Saltillo. We asked him his reason for doing so, but he gave us little satisfaction, saying, "great country, this." We know not what his intentions were, but we think, should he commit any depredations on the Mexicans while not belonging to any corps, Gen. Wool will "skeer an Injin very bad."

The night after leaving Camargo we encamped at the depot on the banks of the Rio Grande. Here we found the boat on which part of the first regiment had started, fast aground. They came ashore and joined us, so we were together once more. At this place we had an exhibition of Mexican rope dancers. They had a large enclosure built up of brush, inside of which they performed. The *house* was crowded, but the performance was very indifferent. They had, also, a clown who performed with his face blacked, and who reminded us of our negro singers in the United States. He spoke a little English, and contrived to make the boys laugh now and then. After it was all over, the boys demolished their apparatus, run them off and commenced playing cards by the light of their fires.

The next day we came to what is termed Upper Reynosa,

and on the 24th we arrived at Lower Reynosa, where we found plenty of steamboats waiting for us. Some embarked that evening and others the next morning, the 25th of June. We now thought that we were parted for good, but, on going down, the first boat got aground, and the other coming along side, jammed against her, and stuck fast also, when the boys sent up three cheers that the great Army of Chihuahua had come together again.

On the evening of the 26th, we reached the mouth of the river, where we tarried one day and then started in wagons for the Brazos, which was nine miles distant. Here we took shipping for New Orleans, and after a pleasant voyage, of four days, with the exception of all hands being a little sea sick, we arrived at the mouth of the Mississippi river, where we found a vessel laden with troops. The Arkansawians were remarking among themselves that they were going to a place they knew but little about, (supposing them to be on their way to Mexico,) when a strapping big fellow got up on the side of the vessel and exclaimed: "Go it, Rackensacks! are you on your way to Chihuahua?" All hands looked-and behold, there were the Suckers, snugly ensconced on board of a vessel, they having left Brazos some six hours before us, and arrived at the Balize about the same time (six hours,) before we did, and here they were now, waiting for a tow-boat to take them to New Orleans. Finally one arrived and towed us all up to the Crescent City, which we reached on the evening of the 3d of July, 1847.

Such a scatterment we never before witnessed, and the next day all hands appeared in a new dress. Here were the men who had travelled over about sixteen hundred miles, lived on wheat bran, ground their own flour in hand mills, helped to fight one of the hardest battles that was ever waged on the American continent, and faced the grim monster death

in every form, now transformed into New Orleans dandies.

And now, kind reader, we have taken you through a great many scenes, and given you an account of things that have occurred under our immediate observation and from various indisputable sources. Should any one who has been attached to the Central Division, observe any thing on these, our humble and unassuming pages, which he thinks incorrect, why, let him pass it over and read that which he is assured is correct. But finally, let him remember, before he passes censure and pronounces judgment from that dread tribunal, (I mean an unmerciful criticism,) that some things may have transpired that he is not aware of and knows nothing about.

As to our humble self, who, in our vale of obscurity, would hardly be noticed further than to be counted as one of the men of the army by those of epauletts, (who are generally crowned with laurels and fill up the measure of their country's glory,) have, notwithstanding, given the circumstances just as they transpired, and have written without fear.

We would say to the public in general, and especially to those into whose hands this little work may fall, after you have read it you will know that there once upon a time existed "The Great Army of Chihuahua."

APPENDIX.

NARRATIVE,

OF MATTERS WHICH TRANSPIRED DURING THE TIME THE AUTHOR WAS LEFT IN THE HANDS OF THE MEXICANS.

THE Arkansas Regiment had been sent to Patos, where they encamped for the purpose of obtaining forage. After being there a short time, an order came from General Wool, which compelled them to leave almost instantaneously.

At this time there was a man in the hospital who could not be removed. His disease indicated death in a very short time. This rendered it indispensably necessary to leave him behind, with some person to attend him. This, however, was a situation which very few seemed to envy, and no one evinced a willingness to enter on the duties of so charitable a calling. The poor invalid, a stranger in a strange land, and far away from friends and relations, excited my pity; and finally, being somewhat fond of romance and adventure, I consented to stay, on one condition. I went to the Colonel and told him that if he would go to the priest and induce him to take care of me, I would remain. He said he would do so, and immediately proceeded, as I judged, to see his reverence. In a few minutes he returned and told me all was right. I then requested that a German, a friend of mine, should remain with me. The sick man being also a German, I deemed

his presence necessary. My request was granted. I then handed my note book to a friend, that he might note every thing of importance which might occur, according to my custom heretofore. If there is anything omitted in our memorandum, between the 11th of January and the 9th of February, this will account for it. The regiment left about daylight.

The Mexicans did not interfere with us for some time, but when they discovered us, they made a perfect charge, taking everything from us but our arms. My German companion was for fighting, but this I knew would be folly, considering we were in their power, and the mildest manner of dealing with them I judged to be the best. Finally, I was aware that I must do something, and placing one of my pistols in my bosom, I determined that if they attempted foul play, I would slay one of them before I gave up the ghost.

In this manner I went to see his reverence the priest. On my way I had no small escort; indeed it reminded me of the visit of the Alcalde of Presidio to General Wool. I entered the house in as humble a manner as I could, in an attitude which I intended to indicate to the priest that I wished for his blessing. However, after these preliminaries came the tug of war. He did not understand one word of English, nor I one word of Spanish. As things went, I was in an unpleasant predicament. But, finally, I struck on a plan which answered my purpose. I beckoned him to follow me, which he did, the crowd of Mexicans escorting us back.

When we entered the hospital, I found my German friend very much excited. A crowd of Mexican boys had assailed him, and there he was, with his sabre buckled on, and a pistol in each hand, using the following language: "Dunner wetter; himmel sackerment! Hole me der tifel, die verdamte spitsbooben, me shoot you justament right off, if you does

not back out from dis blace, and dat devilish soon!" These words were accompanied with a great many antic gestures, at which the Mexicans were enjoying a hearty laugh.

The priest entered the hospital, and fortune appeared to lavish her smiles upon us, as soon as the sacerdotal functionary was in. The invalid, as it now appeared, was a professor of the Roman Catholic religion, and by some means unknown to me, the priest immediately discovered it, and an immediate dispersion of the rabble, who had congregated about the door, was effected.

The priest, after this, took me back to his own house, where he gave me to understand I was to stay. This pleased me not a little, for, by the bye, the quarters looked not uninviing; but how my friend the German and the sick man were to be attended to, I could not conjecture. There was no great use in asking any questions, for neither of us understood a word the other said, consequently I concluded to wait, and see what would be done.

After tarrying a while at the house of his reverence, I returned to the hospital, where I found matters changed, and a different scene from the one which I had before witnessed. My German friend was again assailed, not with boys, however, but with women, while he himself was flying around in a manner which would have done honor to some of the German female cooks in some of our eastern cities, not with a pistol in each hand, as on the former occasion, but with bowls of *atole* (a sort of gruel), *tortillas* (corn cakes), goat's meat, and in fact everything eatable in the Mexican bill of fare.

I had now obtained light on the sublect, and could without much difficulty divine the cause of all these favorable and fortunate changes. It seems the priest had informed the men who had collected when he visited the hospital, that the

sick man was a Catholic, and they had communicated the same to the women, who are constitutionally merciful. They, in consequence, had come with something for the invalid to eat. After my German friend had given him as much of the bounties of the generous-hearted women as was necessary for the time being, he appropriated the balance to himself, saying at the same time : " These Mexshican vomins is much besser as de men."

From this time on, the Mexicans appeared quite full of friendship, and conducted themselves with deference and respect towards me. I boarded at the reverend gentleman's house, and the German always got enough to eat and drink from the balance which remained from what was brought by the women for the sick man.

The priest commenced teaching me to speak Spanish, at which I was quite an apt scholar. I soon began to *habelar* (talk) tolerably well. The sick man, as had been expected from the nature of his disease, and connecting and surrounding circumstances, died in a few days, and was buried in the church yard. Having lived and died as a soldier, in the service of his adopted country, we buried him with the honors of war. I had a stone affixed to his grave, to designate his last resting place, no more to be disturbed, until the sound of Gabriel's trump shall wake him at the last day.

I should have mentioned before, that a horse which had been sick, and unable to travel on a forced march, was left here, the owner thereof having taken the sick man's horse and accompanied the regiment. The priest's idea, in this case, was that should the man die, he would retain the horse as an equivalent for his burial fees. My German friend begged leave to object to the opinion of his reverence, by saying : " You besser sell de hause for vat he vill fetch, and dat monish ve vill den put in our own bockets, and after dat go

to de camp." I saw at one glance the plausibility and seeming truth of the old man's words, and shortly after the invalid's death, sold the horse to a young Mexican buck, who had previously wanted him, for twenty dollars.

The moment his reverence was informed of the transaction, he became enraged, and went on at a tremendous rate, declaring he would have the horse. My readers may imagine that I now felt rather queer, and judged myself to be in a bad fix. I conjectured that probably if I would give him the money it would pacify him. With this view I went to the German, who had all the money, for as I was out more than he, I concluded it unsafe to carry any money about me, and related to him the passion the *holy man* had worked himself into, and likewise intimated to him that we had better give the price of the horse to the priest. "What!" said he, geb him the monish? Dunner wetter the holiy sackerment! Give him de gelt? Dat ve vill not do. The gelt ish good for get sour-krout mit, and ve vill shump on our hakkys and go to de camp, quicker as Dr. Faust over the big sea!"

I thought of doing this myself, but the distance was great, and we would have been compelled to pass through a very dangerous country and hostile people. The Colonel had promised to send back an escort for us, but I was uncertain when it would come, hence our condition, every way, was anything but enviable.

In this predicament I went to the priest, and told him that we were going to leave for the American camp. He would not listen to such a story, but without further circumlocution locked my horse up in his stable, and procured quarters for the German in the house of a sort of Mexican carpenter, adjoining his own. I now considered my case almost hopeless, and that if the Colonel did not send for me, I might remain for an indefinite time.

In the meanwhile, however, the priest's wrath moderated. He became more calm, and his conversation more mild. He endeavored to persuade me out of the notion of returning to camp, and offered to give me everything I wished, if I would only consent to stay.

About this time I became acquainted with Gen. Sanchzes, of the Mexican Army, who was on a visit to the place. He offered to take me to Gen. Santa Anna, and procure me a commission. Thus situated, I knew not what to do. Finally, I told him and the priest that if an escort did not come for me in three months, I would remain with them, but as to entering the Mexican service, I never could or would think of that, "because," said I, "I do not like our own service, and only volunteered out of ambition to serve my country in time of need." This quieted them somewhat.

My readers, no doubt, will ask how I carried on this conversation. A painter came there some time subsequent to my being left, who could speak pretty good English. With his aid we got along pretty well, considering that by this time I could speak Spanish tolerably well, having been a close student of the priest's.

About this time, also, information reached here of the capture of Majors Gaines and Borland's party at Encarnacion. This created a rejoicing time among the Mexicans, and the priest now urged and compelled me to change my costume, I having worn my uniform until now. He assigned as his reason for this notion, his fear that the Mexican soldiers might kill me if they should encounter me in my country's costume. He supplied me with a suit from his own wardrobe, which was anything but a good fit. After introducing myself into these clothes, I felt something like performing religious exercises.

An accident transpired during my sojourn, which might

have led to serious consequences. I had some Peruvian bark and ground flaxseed left with me by the Hospital Surgeon, to be administered to the sick man, which I kept in my saddle-bags. One day, while in the act of taking something out, they noticed these medicaments, and forthwith declared I was a physician. I protested against it and said all I could to explain matters, but my labor proved abortive. They knew better—they had seen the medicine.

In a few days it appeared as if some epidemic was prevailing in town, in consequence of which I had to feel the pulses of not a few. This part of the game I had no great repugnance to, more especially when called on by the ladies. I dosed out the flaxseed and bark with the gravity of a regular built quack doctor. Sometimes I mixed them, and at other times I gave them alone. In quite a short time I could examine a patient with as much grace, obsequiousness and independence, as any genuine son of Esculapius.

I told the joke to my German man Friday, and he said: "Den I vish, gooter as sour krout, ve had some arshnic, ve vould gif dem a dose, py shure." I did not agree with him in this, as I did not go in for killing folks, knowing that the flaxseed at least was perfectly harmless.

One day I came very near being caught in a bad scrape. Having felt a lady's pulse, but wishing to avoid administering my powders, I recommended bleeding. Not having any lance, I expected no further trouble in this case, but my fair patient's mental resources were not so soon run ashore, for bled she said she must be. She therefore despatched a servant girl to a man who, she said, would lend her one. Sure enough, I was now in a dilemma and knew not what to do. I hastened to my German friend and asked him what was to be done. "Vy, py shure, den, pleed her just like von leetle hog," said he. So I screwed up all my courage and

concluded to perform venesection, hit or miss. At last I observed the messenger coming, when I quickly examined my own veins to see how I had been bled, and proceeded to the priest's house to meet my patient and bleed her in the best manner I possibly could. But what was my joy when I was informed that the lance in question could not be obtained. The obnoxious flaxseed and barks, however, had again to be resorted to.

They were in the habit of taking me to fandangoes, and one evening requested me to go to one. I agreed, and on entering the house, was horror struck to see the corpse of a child laid out and they dancing around it. This was a new play to me, but I had to take share in the *sport*. Afterwards I found out that it was a custom. At funerals they generally accompany the corpse with music and firing of muskets.

I now heard of the approach of Santa Anna's army, and his proposed attack on the American forces. The Mexicans were sure of a victory, and my feelings began to be awful, considering the small number of our forces and the comparatively great number of Santa Anna's. I thought ours might have to retreat to Monterey, so that I would be still farther away from them, and should Santa Anna be victorious my doom would be sealed.

But I was finally relieved of all my fears, for on the morning of the 9th of February, a Mexican came galloping up to the door and reported that the Americans were coming. The priest appeared thunder-struck, never having entertained the idea that our officers would send after me.

It proved to be six companies of the Arkansas Regiment who were sent out for corn, and the Colonel had sent Lieut. Giles, of the company to which I was attached, (my company was not along,) to go to Patos and see about me. The

priest wanted me to go to the prison and he would lock me in, and tell the Americans that I had started for camp. I told him that would not do, for the German would tell them better. He then said he would lock the German up also. I again told him it would not answer, and that the American officers would not credit such a tale as that, and in case they did not find me they would sack and demolish the town, and take him in my stead.

Just as I was about concluding the last sentence, the Americans marched in, and the above named Lieutenant, (to whom I shall ever be indebted for the interest he took in my affairs,) rode up to the priest's door, where I met him. To me it was a joyful meeting, for I now felt that I was free. The German ran about in perfect extacies, shaking his fists at every Mexican that came in his way, saying, "Dunder and blitzen—fetch mich der tifel, if I had some schnaps now, I would get so drunk as every ting."

At last I bade farewell to my Mexican friends, who, I must say, treated me better than I had expected; but no one knows what they would have done had Santa Anna arrived and whipped the American forces, as they expected he would do.

On the 11th of February I arrived in camp, and then and there resolved never again to cast myself on the tender mercies of the Mexicans as long as I could avoid the contingency.

DESPATCHES

OF GENERAL WOOL AND COLONEL ROANE.

HEADQUARTERS, CAMP TAYLOR, AGUA NUEVA, 20 miles south of Saltillo, Mexico, *March* 4, 1847.

MAJOR: Agreeably to the orders from the commanding general, I have the honor to report that on the 21st ultimo the troops at Agua Nueva broke up their encampment, and preceded by the supply and baggage train, marched for Buena Vista and Saltillo, except Col. Yell's Regiment of Arkansas Volunteers, which remained to look out for the enemy, reported to be advancing on Agua Nueva in great force, and to guard some public stores left at the hacienda until transportation could be obtained to carry them to Buena Vista.

On the arrival of the commanding general at Encantada, he directed that Col. M'Kee's Regiment, 2d Kentucky Volunteers, and a section of Capt. Washington's battery, be kept at that place to give support to Col. Yell, in case he should be driven in by the enemy. Between Encantada and Buena Vista, called the pass, Col. Hardin's Regiment, 1st Illinois Volunteers, was stationed. The rest of my command encamped near the hacienda of Buena Vista. The major general commanding, accompanied by Lieut. Col. May's squadron (2d dragoons), Captains Sherman's and Bragg's batteries (3d artillery), and the Mississippi Regiment, commanded by Col. Davis, proceeded to Saltillo, to provide against the attack meditated by Gen. Minon, with a cavalry force reported to be 3,000 strong. As many wagons as could be obtained were ordered to return forthwith to Agua Nueva, and bring off what remained of the stores at that place.

In the course of the evening, agreeably to the instructions of the commanding general, transmitted from Saltillo, Col. Marshall, with his regiment and the 1st dragoons were ordered to Agua Nueva to reinforce Col. Yell, who was directed, in case he should be attacked, to destroy everything at that place he could not bring off, and to tirere before 12 o'clock, P. M. Col. M'Kee, at Encantada, with the section of artillery, was directed to join Col. Yell on his retreat, and

the whole to fall back to Buena Vista, should the enemy pursue them to that place. Before leaving Agua Nueva, Col. Yell's pickets were driven in by the advanced parties of the Mexicans. He then retired with the reinforcements under the command of Col. Marshall, after destroying a small quantity of corn yet remaining at the hacienda, and leaving a few wagons which had been precipitately abandoned by their teamsters.

All the advanced parties came into Buena Vista, except Colonel Hardin's Regiment, before daylight on the morning of the 22d.

At 8 o'clock, A. M., on the 22d, I received notice that the Mexican army was at Agua Nueva, and ordered a section of Capt. Washington's artillery to move forward and join Col. Hardin. Shortly afterwards I repaired to that position where it had been determined to give battle to the enemy. During the previous night, agreeably to my orders, Col. Hardin's Regiment had thrown up a parapet on the height, on the left of the road, and had dug a small ditch, and made a parapet extending from the road around the edge of the gully, on the right of the road. They were then directed to dig a ditch and make a parapet across the road for the protection of Capt. Washington's artillery, leaving a narrow passage next to the hill, which was to be closed by running into it two wagons loaded with stone.

About 9 o'clock our pickets, stationed at the Encantada, about three and a half miles distant, discovered the enemy advancing Word was immediately despatched to the commanding general at Saltillo, and I ordered the troops at Buena Vista forthwith to be brought forward.

Capt. Washington's battery was posted across the road, protected on its left by a commanding eminence, and on its left by deep gullies. The 2d Kentucky infantry, commanded by Col. M'Kee, was stationed on a hill, immediately in the rear of Washington's battery. The six companies of the 1st Illinois Regiment, commanded by Col. Hardin, took post on the eminence on the left; and two companies under Lieut. Col. Weatherford, occupied the breastwork on the right of Washington's battery. The 2d Illinois Regiment was stationed on the left of the Kentucky Regiment. The Indiana Brigade, commanded by Brig. Gen. Lane, was posted on a ridge immediately in rear of the front line, and Captain Stein's squadron in reserve, in rear of the Indiana Brigade. The Kentucky Regiment of Cavalry, under the command of Col. Marshall, and the Arkansas Regiment, under the command of Col. Yell, were stationed to the left of the second line towards the mountains. Shortly afterwards the rifle companies of these two regiments were dismounted, and with the cavalry companies of the Kentucky Regiment, and a battalion of riflemen from the Indiana Brigade, under Major Gorman, under command of Col. Marshall, were ordered to take post on the extreme left, and at the foot of the mountains.

These dispositions were apprved by the major general commanding, who had now returned from Saltillo, bringing with him Lieut. Col. May's squadron of the 2d dragoons, Captains Sherman's

and Bragg's batteries of artillery, and the Mississippi Regiment of Riflemen.

The enemy had halted just beyond cannon shot, and displayed his forces on either side of the road, and commenced pushing his light infantry into the mountains on our left. At the same time indications of an attempt on our right induced the Commanding General to order the 2d Kentucky Infantry and Capt. Bragg's Battery, with a detachment of mounted men, to take post on the the right of the gullies, and at some distance in advance of Capt. Washington's Battery, in the centre. Capt. Sherman's Battery was held in reserve in rear of the second line.

The enemy was now seen pushing his infantry on his right toward the heights, showing evidently an intention to turn our left, in order to get possession of the key to our position—the eminence immediately on the left of Washington's artillery—and thus open a free passage to Saltillo.

Col. Marshall, with his regiment, the Arkansas Riflemen, under Lieut. Col. Roane, and the Indiana Rifle Batallion, under Major Gorman, was charged with meeting this party, and checking their movement on our left. Brigadier Gen. Lane, with the 2d Indiana Regiment and a section of Capt. Washington's artillery, under Lieut. O'Brien (since Captain in the Quartermaster's Department,) was ordered to the extreme left and front of the plain, which was terminated by a deep ravine, extending from the mountain to the road, with orders to prevent the enemy from coming around by the base of the mountain.

At two o'clock the enemy's light infantry were moving up the side of the mountain and in the ravines. They opened a fire on our riflemen from a large howitzer, posted in the road, and between hree and four o'clock Col. Marshall engaged the Mexican Infantry on the side of the mountain, and the firing continued at intervals until dark. In this our troops sustained no loss, whilst that of the enemy is known, by a subsequent inspection of the ground, to be considerable. After the firing had ceased, the Major General commanding again returned to Saltillo to see to matters at that place, and to guard against Gen. Minon and his cavalry, taking with him the Mississippi Regiment and a squadron of the 2d Dragoons.

The troops remained under arms during the night in the position hey occupied at the close of the day. About two o'clock, A. M., of the 23d, our piquets were driven in by the Mexicans, and at the dawn of day the action was renewed by the Mexican light infantry and our riflemen on the side of the mountain.

The enemy had succeeded during the night and early in the morning, in gaining the very top of the mountain, and to our left and rear. He had reinforced his extreme right by some 1,500 to 2,000 infantry.

Major Prail, 2d Illinois Volunteers, was ordered, with his battalion of riflemen, to reinforce Col. Marshall, who was engaged in holding the right of the enemy in check.

The enemy now opened a fire upon our left, from a battery planted on the side of the mountain, near where his light infantry had commenced ascending it—everything now indicating that the main attack would be against our left.

The 2d Kentucky infantry and Bragg's battery of artillery were, by instructions given to Major Mansfield, ordered from the extreme right, and Sherman's battery ordered up from the rear to take post with Col. Bissell's regiment, 2d Illinois Volunteers, on the plateau which extends from the centre of the line to the foot of the mountain, the sides of which were now filled with the Mexican infantry and our riflemen, between whom the firing had become very brisk.

About this time the Major General commanding, was seen returning from Saltillo with the Mississippi regiment and the squadron of the 2d dragoons, and shortly after he arrived and took his position in the centre of the field of battle, where he could see and direct the operations of the day.

At eight o'clock a large body of the enemy, composed of infantry, lancers, and three pieces of artillery, moved down the high road upon our centre, held by Capt. Washington's battery and the 1st Illinois Volunteers, but were soon dispersed by the former. The rapidity and precision of the fire of the artillery scattered and dispersed this force in a few minutes with considerable loss on their side, and little or none on our own.

In connexion with this movement, a heavy column of the enemy's infantry and cavalry and the battery on the side of the mountain moved against our left, which was held by Brigadier Gen. Lane with the 2d Indiana regiment and Lieut. O'Brien's section of artillery, by whom the enemy's fire was warmly returned, and, owing to the range, with great effect. Gen. Lane, agreeably to my orders, wishing to bring his infantry within striking distance, ordered his line to move forward. This order was duly obeyed by Lieut. O'Brien. The infantry, however, instead of advancing, retired in disorder, and, in spite of the utmost efforts of their General and his officers, left the artillery unsupported and fled the field of battle. Some of them were rallied by Col. Bowles, who, with the fragment, fell in with the ranks of the Mississippi riflemen, and during the day did good service with that gallant regiment. I deeply regret to say that most of them did not return to the field, and many of them continued their flight to Saltillo.

Lieut. O'Brien, being unsupported by any infantry, and not being able to make head against the heavy column bearing down upon him with a destructive fire, fell back on the centre, leaving one of his pieces, at which all the cannoniers and horses were either killed or disabled, in the hands of the enemy. Seeing themselves cut off from the centre by the flight of the 2d Indiana Regiment, and the consequent advance of the Mexican infantry and cavalry upon the ground previously occupied by it, the riflemen, under the command of Col. Marshall, retreated from their position in the mountain, where they had been so successfully engaged with the enemy on

the other side of the dry bed of a deep and broad torrent that is immediately in rear of our position. Here many fled in disorder to the rear. Some of them were subsequently rallied and brought again into action, with their brave companions; others were stopped at the hacienda of Buena Vista, and there re-formed by their officers.

The enemy immediately brought forward a battery of three pieces, and took a position on the extreme left of our line, under the mountain, and commenced an enfilading fire on our centre, which was returned with so much effect upon the advancing column of the Mexicans, containing near 6,000 infantry and lancers, that it forced them to keep to the upper side of the plateau, close under the side of the mountain; and, instead of turning to the left, and advancing on our centre, against the heavy fire of so much well served artillery, continued its course perpendicular to our line on the extreme left, crossed over the bed of the dry torrent, in the direction taken by our retreating riflemen, keeping all the while close to the foot of the mountain. Colonels Marshall and Yell, with their cavalry companies, Col. May, with the squadron of the 1st and 2d dragoons, and Capt. Pike's squadron, Arkansas Cavalry, in connection with a brigade of infantry, formed of the Mississippi Regiment, the 3d Indiana, under Col. Lane, and a fragment of the 2d Indiana Regiment, under Col. Bowles, and Bragg's battery, and three pieces of Sherman's battery, succeeded in checking the march of this column. The Mississippi Regiment alone, and with a howitzer under Capt. Sherman, moved against some 4,000 of the enemy, and stopped them in their march upon Saltillo. A large body of lancers, from this body, formed column in one of the mountain gorges, and advanced, through the Mexican infantry, to make a descent on the hacienda of Buena Vista, near which our train of supplies and baggage had been packed. They were gallantly and successfully met by our mounted men, under Colonels Marshall and Yell, and the attacking column separated, part returning to the mountain, under cover of their infantry, and a part through the hacienda. Here the latter were met by a destructive fire from those men who had left the field in the early part of the action, and had been rallied by their officers. Col. May's dragoons, and a section of artillery, under Lieut. Reynolds, coming up at this moment, completed the route of this portion of the enemy's cavalry. The column which had passed our left, and had gone some two miles to our rear, now faced about, and commenced retracing their steps, exposing their right flank to a very heavy and destructive fire from our infantry and artillery, who were drawn up in a line parallel to the march of the retreating column, of whom many were forced on and over the mountains, and many dispersed.

Gen. Santa Anna, seeing the situation of this part of his army, and, no doubt, considering them as cut off, sent in a flag to the Major General commanding, to know what he desired. The General asked me to be the bearer of his answer, to which I cheerfully assented, and proceeded immediately to the enemy's battery, under

the mountains, to see the Mexican General-in-Chief. But in consequence of a refusal to cease firing on our troops, to whom the news of the truce had not yet been communicated, and who were actively engaged with the Mexican infantry, I declared the parley at an end, and returned without seeing General Santa Anna, or communicating the answer of the General commanding.

The Mexican column was now in rapid retreat, pursued by our artillery, infantry, and cavalry, and, notwithstanding the effect of our fire, they succeeded for the greater part, favored by the configuration of the ground, in crossing the bed of the torrent, and regaining the plateau from which they had previously descended.

Whilst this was taking place on the left and rear of the line, our centre, under the immediate eye of the commanding General, although it suffered much in killed and wounded, stood firm, and repelled every attempt to march upon it.

The Mexican forces being now concentrated on our left, made a move to carry our centre, by advancing with his whole strength from the left and front. At this moment, Lieut. O'Brien was ordered to advance his battery and check this movement. He did so in a bold and gallant manner, and maintained his position until his supporting force was completely routed by an immensely superior force. His men and horses being nearly all killed and wounded, he found himself under the necessity of abandoning his pieces, and they fell into the hands of the enemy. From this point the enemy marched upon the centre, where the shock was met by Col. McKee, the 1st Illinois, under Col. Hardin, and the 2d, under Col. Bissell, all under the immediate eye of the commanding General. This was the hottest, as well as the most critical, part of the action, and at the moment when our troops were about giving way before the vastly superior force with which they were contending, the batteries of Captains Sherman and Bragg coming up most opportunely from the rear, and under the immediate direction of the commanding General, by a well directed fire checked and drove back with great loss the enemy, who had come close upon the muzzles of their pieces. A part of the enemy's lancers took our infantry in flank, and drove them down the ravine in front of Capt. Washington's battery, who saved them by a well-directed and well-timed fire from his pieces.

This was the last great effort of Gen. Santa Anna; the firing, however, between the enemy's artillery and our own, continued until night.

The troops lay on their arms in the position in which they were placed at evening. Major Warren's command, of four companies of Illinois infantry, and a detachment of Capt. Webster's company, under Lieut. Donaldson, were brought on the field from Saltillo, where they had performed, during the day, important services in connexion with Capt. Webster's battery, under a piece ably served by Lieut. (now Captain) Shover, 3d Artillery, in repelling the attack under Gen. Minon and his Cavalry on that place.

Every arrangement was made to engage the enemy early the next morning, when, at day-break, it was discovered he had retreated under cover of the night, leaving about 1,000 dead and several hundred wounded on the field of battle, and 294 prisoners in our hands, one standard and a large number of arms.

The forces engaged in the great battle of the 22d and 23d ultimo, were as follows:

The United States Troops, commanded by Major Gen. Taylor, amounted to only 4,610 including officers.

The forces under command of Gen. Santa Anna amounted to 22,000. Some of the Mexican officers taken prisoners stated the number to be 24,000, exclusive of artillery. This number, I presume, included Gen. Minon's cavalry, reported to be from 2,000 to 3,000.

The enemy is represented to be in a disorganized state, and that the losses in killed and wounded, and by desertion, exceed 6,000 men. The dead, the dying, and the wounded in a starving condition, everywhere to be seen on its route, bespeak a hurried retreat and extreme distress.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant.

JOHN E. WOOL, *Brig. Gen.*

To Major W. W. S. Bliss, Asst. Adjt. Gen.

Camp Taylor, Mexico, *Feb.* 27, 1847.

Brig. Gen. John E. Wool: On the evening of the 22d, when we were first drawn up in line of battle to meet the enemy, who at that time was in our immediate vicinity, I was assigned to the command of four companies of riflemen, Col. Yell taking command of four companies of cavalry, two companies of our regiment, commanded by Captains Pike and Preston, Jr., being detached, and acting with some other corps.

On the evening of the 22d, the Mexicans having taken possession of the mountain side, with the view of turning our left flank, I was ordered to ascend the mountain, and if possible dislodge them from this position. This I attempted, in connexion with the Kentucky Riflemen, but darkness coming on, we were recalled, after sustaining a heavy fire for more than an hour, and camped upon the plain until morning.

On the morning of the 22d, the position of my command was designated by our gallant general himself; to whose cool and heroic courage, military judgment, and commanding genius, I would add my humble testimonial. Two companies, under Captains Patrick and Hunter, were posted some distance in advance, to bring on the engagement, which they did, sustaining their position as long as

required, and then fell back and joined my command (Capt. Preston's and Lt. Trousdale's companies). Immediately on their taking position in line, I, with my whole command, moved forward to the front, and took position in line with the infantry, who were at this time under a heavy fire from Mexican small arms. This position my battalion sustained for some time, never yielding until many were killed and wounded, and not then until a regiment of infantry who were giving way before the advancing foe, rushed among them bearing many off with them, and throwing others into confusion, separating the officers from the men. A number of my command, who remained on the field, fell in with the Illinois Infantry, and with them fought the battle out. Finding it impossible to rally those who had thus been disordered, I mounted my horse and joined Col. Yell.

The Kentucky and Arkansas Cavalry having been acting together during the day, were at this time in good order, falling back before the Mexican horse. About this time, gaining an advantageous position, the command was given to charge, which was promptly obeyed, and, for the first time during the day, the Mexicans were driven back, sustaining a very heavy loss from our carbines and sabres. The enemy being reinforced, it was thought advisable to fall back again, which we did, the Mexican lancers pursuing. When we had gained the plain, some miles distant, we were halted, and prepared to receive their charge. Simultaneously with the command of the Mexican officers to charge, was it echoed by Colonels Marshall and Yell, as they led on their men. Midway the contending lines met, and Col. Yell, my immediate commander, fell at the first onset, covered with wounds.

Upon the fall of Col. Yell, the command of the regiment devolved on myself, as next in command. The fight still went on, and though many of our brave men lay dead and bleeding, Mexican numbers were forced to yield to Saxon courage. The Mexicans were entirely routed. Some thirty-five of them lay dead on the field, and hundreds bleeding made their escape.

From this time until night, myself and command continued to act under the command of Col. Marshall, and, although not again brought to fight hand to hand with the enemy, yet were all the time on the field, and often in the most perilous positions.

The number killed upon the ground, out of the eight companies of our regiment, who were at different times in the fight under my command, was twenty-three killed and forty wounded, most of them dangerously, some of whom have since died, and others doubtless will.

In mentioning those whose gallant conduct happened to fall under my personal observation, I would not be thought to make invidious distinctions. That there were others whose conduct was alike gallant and worthy of notice and commendation, I have not a doubt. To others I leave the pleasing task of placing them in their proper position before a grateful and admiring country.

It is with feelings of mingled pleasure and heartfelt regret, that I mention the names of the brave and chivalrous Col. Yell and Capt. Porter, who died, as all were prepared to expect should it be their fate to fall, at the head of their commands, urging them on to victory and leading the way. By the side of these I would place the names of John Pelham and D. Stewart; although they were privates in the ranks, they fought like soldiers.

Amongst those who were more fortunate and still live to enjoy the good name they that day won, I would mention Surgeon E. H. Roane and Assistant Surgeon J. W. Glenn, who disregarding personal safety, were often found ministering to the wounded and suffering where danger and death were most frequently met; not passing by unnoticed Surgeon C. Peyton, who kindly volunteered his skilful professional services, to alleviate the sufferings of some of our wounded, who happened to fall near him.

Amongst the officers of my command whom I, by my relative position, happened to observe, I would mention Capts. Patrick, Hunter and Dillord; Lieutenants C. Trousdale, W. McKean, Desha, the two Searcys, Reeder, McLain, Carr, Stewart, Geo. Foster, Tomberlin and Wilhoff, and Adjutant Mears.

Of non-commissioned officers and privates, out of a long list I might mention, without disparagement to others, I give the names of Seargeant Major B. F. Ross, who was long in the fight, and never yielded until shot down on the battle field, 1st Seargeant John D. Adams, Quartermaster; Seargeant McVicar and Forage Master Magruder; privates Wm. Queensbury, John Laister and Joshua Danley, who was three times wounded. I might mention others, but the list would be too long.

This is a hasty account of what was done, and the names of a few, very few of those who bore an honorable part in it, by the Arkansas Regiment, on the memorable 22d and 23d instants, days that will be remembered whilst Americans continue to reverence chivalry and heroic deeds, and as the days on which the proof conclusive was furnished to the world that the spirits of a Jackson and a Napoleon still live in a Taylor and a Wool.

I am, with great respect,

Your very obedient servant,

JOHN SELDEN ROANE,

Lt. Col. Comd'g Arkansas Cavalry.

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